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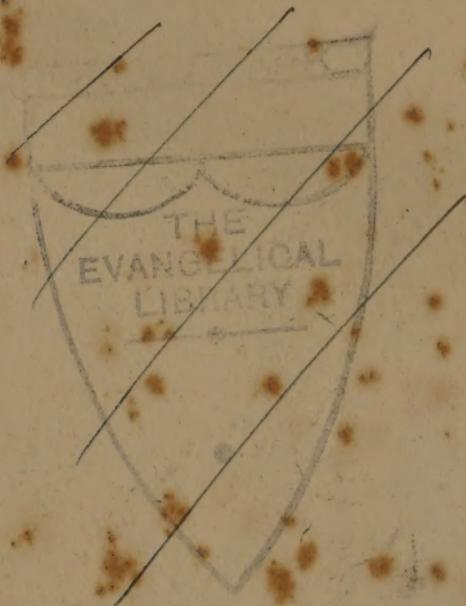


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LECTURES

ON

ST. JOHN XVII.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

SERMONS AT BELGRAVE CHAPEL.

LECTURES ON ROMANS V.

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THE ORDINANCE OF THE PASSOVER, AND
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LECTURES

ON

ST. JOHN XVII.

BY THE

REV. M. RAINSFORD, B.A.,

MINISTER OF BELGRAVE CHAPEL.

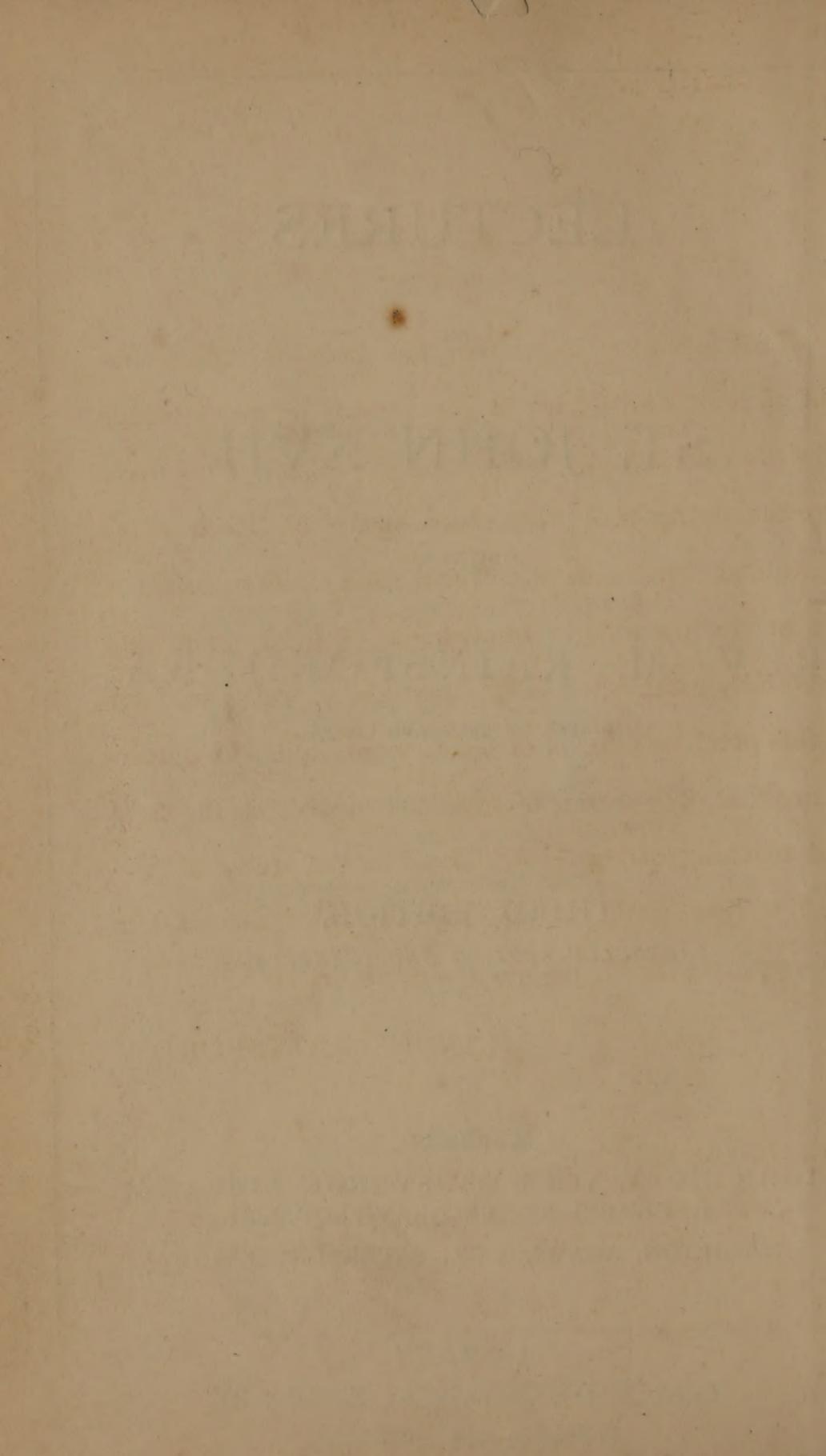
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THE following exposition has been for some time out of print, and I have been requested by many valued Christian friends to revise and republish it. I have attempted the task with much pleasure. Each year's additional experience of self and need tends to convince me of the paramount importance of being more and more fully established in the inestimable truths set forth in this precious portion of God's word, and with sincere desire that each reader of my book may enjoy the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost in the study of it, I send it now forth to the praise of the glory of him whose prayer for his people it was, and is.

MARCUS RAINSFORD.

BELGRAVE CHAPEL,

April 1882.

NOTES ON JOHN XVII.

1

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come.”—JOHN xvii. 1.

THIS chapter is a prayer; it is emphatically the Lord's prayer. That which we commonly call the Lord's prayer he taught his disciples, but did not use himself. The petition, “Forgive us our trespasses,” could never have been uttered by the Lord Jesus Christ. This prayer, on the other hand, is as emphatically *his own*—his disciples were not invited to unite in it; it was a prayer they did not and could not utter; evidently the Lord spake so as to be heard, and the disciples listened; the Holy Ghost has provided that not one petition should be lost to the church of God. I would remark, in passing, that we often find the Lord *teaching* his disciples to pray, we read of his spending even whole nights in prayer *for* his disciples; but I am not aware

that we ever find him praying *with* his disciples. Indeed, there would seem to be something incongruous in the Lord Jesus Christ kneeling down *with* his disciples for prayer ; there must always have been something peculiar in his petitions.

At this time his work on earth was over, nothing remained for him but to die : "I have *finished* the work which thou gavest me to do." (v. 4.) The Last Supper was over, the Lord had dispensed to his disciples the broken bread and poured-out wine, memorials of his dying love ; he had expressed to them his desire, that in remembrance of him, they should often gather together and show forth his death in this *illustration* and pledge of their union with each other and with himself, until his return to them in glory. He had washed their feet ; he had comforted them ; he had opened his whole heart *to them*. He now opens it *for them* to him before whom "all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid ;" and having poured out his whole soul into the ear, and into the bosom of God, he went forth into Gethsemane. May God the Spirit be with us and give unction and understanding to our hearts, while, from time to time, we meditate together upon this most precious chapter.

It was our Lord's parting prayer ; it was a preface to his sacrifice, he left it with us as a specimen of the intercession which even now he carries on for us at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

"These words spake Jesus ;" the reference evidently is to the foregoing discourse, and not to what he was about to say. "These words spake Jesus." From the

fourteenth chapter we have the record of them, they were words of life and joy, they were words of peace and hope, they were utterances of inexpressible love, "These words spake Jesus." He had told them *who he was!*—Philip said, "shew us the Father," and Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father?" (xiv. 9.) *Why he was about to leave them!*—"In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." (xiv. 2.) He had told them, *he could hear them till*, though in his Father's house—"whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." (v. 13, 14.) "These words spake Jesus." He had told them *how he loved them.*—As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." (xiv. 9.) *Of the certainty of his return!*—"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." (xiv. 3.) He had told them, *Whom he would send to them!*—"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." (xiv. 16.) "These words spake Jesus." He had told them of *their union with himself*, whether absent or present—"I am the vine, ye are the branches." (xv. 1.) And that vine was now about to have its roots in the risen and glorified humanity on the very throne of God. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Henceforth the blood-royal of heaven is in your veins; henceforth identification with myself is your *position*,

and the consequence of that identification is your *portion*.

Then, at the close of chap. xvi., he had told them of *The legacy he was about to leave them*,—peace in a world full of tribulation, peace in himself, and triumph, though the world, the flesh, and the devil were all leagued against them. “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Moreover, there were words of warning; he had told them of trial, of danger, of difficulty: “If the world hate you ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but *because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*” (xv. 18, 19.) Again he had warned them of another class of trial. “Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me.” (xv. 20, 21.)

“These words spake Jesus.” Little did they contain of the circumstances of his own sorrow; he hints at the betrayal, because he would melt the heart of the betrayer; he tells Peter of his denial because he would have him know that all the weakness and the waywardness of the wayward heart were fully known to him when first he called him from his fishing nets to be his servant. But there was nothing of Gethsemane, nothing of the judgment-hall, nothing of Golgotha; they could not bear it *yet*. It was not of his own, but of his people’s sorrow the Saviour was thinking.

“These words spake Jesus.” *With what object?*
 “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that *your joy might be full.*” (xv. 11.) “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be *offended.*” (xvi. 1.) “These things have I spoken unto you, that *in me ye might have peace.*” (xvi. 33.)

And then having given, those whom he loved from the beginning and loved to the end, all the comfort, all the instruction, all the encouragement, all the warning, and having expressed to them all the love that filled his soul, he “lifted up his eyes to heaven.” Earth had been a wilderness to him, and he was about to be trodden in its wine-press, the baptism with which he was to be baptized, and of which he said his soul was straitened till it should be accomplished, was about to begin. He lifted up his eyes to heaven, his rest was *there*, his throne was *there*, his angels were *there*. Oh, that desiring look! that expecting look! that confiding look! He “lifted up his eyes to heaven,” the weary, weary eyes, the thirsting eyes, “Father, the hour is come.”

Now I ask your attention to two things:

I. The prayer, as it is Christ's prayer.

II. The arguments he uses.

I. Our glorious Christ had *promised* from God all the things he now proceeds to *ask* from God; what he purchased, or was about to purchase with his blood, he here asks his Father to bestow as a favour upon his dear people. Learn! that God gives us promises in order to incite us to prayer. What the Saviour had spoken from God *to them* he now speaks to God *of them*, and *for*

them ; so faithful is Christ that he will never say anything to us that he will not say for us. Let us, therefore, have strong confidence, let us rest and triumph in him.

The Lord Jesus Christ in prayer ! What a wonderful theme for study and contemplation ! Prayer was the messenger he was wont to send on all his errands, and in this he is an example to us. By prayer he held his constant intercourse with heaven, and we have no better way of doing it. Prayer was the arrow of Christ's deliverance, and the shield of his help,—“Lord teach us how to pray.”

II. Next observe the *arguments* ; they are two, and they are very short.

The first is, “FATHER !” Who can tell the power of that argument ? Who can tell how that cry thrilled in the heart of God—“*Father.*” When he taught his disciples, he said, “When ye pray, say Father ;” he at least knew that Father's heart. Speaking of it, he says “What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread will he give him a stone ? or, if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.” Again, “*Your Heavenly Father* knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” Again “Fear not, little flock, for it is *your Father's* good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” “He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father.” A child of God need never seek a more prevailing cry !

Observe how frequently our Lord returns to it. Not less than six times in the prayer we find the same ex

pression, more or less varied, "O Father" (v. 5), "Holy Father" (v. 11), "Father" (v. 21): again, "Father" (v. 24), and "righteous Father" (v. 25). They that know that name will put their trust in Him who bids us call him Father.

The second argument, **THE HOUR IS COME!** Many an hour had come on the dial of time since time began, but no hour like this. It was the hour on which his own and his Father's heart had been set, and with the issues of which his own and his Father's thoughts had been engaged from all eternity. It was the hour for which he became incarnate, and for which he came into the world; it was the hour when all God's waves and billows were to pass over him, and when "judgment was to be brought to the line and righteousness to the plummet." It was the hour when his holy soul was to be made an offering for sin, when having been given by God to us he was about to offer up himself to God for us. "*The hour is come.*" Satan's hour, your hour, as he said to his enemies, the hour of judgment, the hour of his weakness, the hour of death to him. "Father, the hour is come," *that hour*, out of which thy love, thy promise, thy covenant engagements are pledged to deliver me. See! he rests his soul on the promise of God. "Mine arm shall strengthen him . . . and I will beat down his foes before his face." "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." "In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me." "I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." The promises now fill the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ and *he pleads them*. "Father, the hour is come.—*Thine*

hour, *mine* hour, mine enemies' hour, and my people's hour.

Remember, as you study this chapter, how evidently we are taught that prayer is not intended to move the heart of God—no need for that. The Lord will have his people to pray, in order that they may assure *their own hearts*, by bringing their need, their difficulties, and their cases before him whom they have been taught to know as able and willing to help them. Prayer is promise sent back to God in faith and confidence for the performance; and the prayer of faith is a testimony of the same. No lengthy arguments are needed, the Saviour's prayer has taught us this. One cry is sufficient, "*Father;*" one fact, "*The hour is come.*"

2

"*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.*"—JOHN xvii. 1.

IT is altogether necessary to keep clearly before our minds the position, state, and character in which our blessed Lord was at the time he uttered this prayer. *As God he could not pray.* He would have no one to pray to, nor could he possibly have received any addition to his essential glory. The blessed Lord Jesus is here presenting himself before his Father in his official and mediatorial office and character. He had undertaken before time was, to take upon him the form of a servant,

to be made in the likeness of sinful men ; and being found in fashion as a man to humble himself to death, even the death of the cross. For this end he was born, for this end he came into the world, and he who had been in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, is now presenting himself before God as the Mediator—the man Christ Jesus.

The hour was come. He had fulfilled all righteousness, he had magnified the law in his life, and now he was about to magnify it in his death. As the surety for the church, as its substitute, he now stands beside the altar on which he was about to lay down his whole person an offering to God for a sweet smelling savour ; and as Solomon, when he had constructed the temple, dedicated it to God, whose temple it was, and the glory came and filled the house, so here we have a greater than Solomon, consecrating the mystical temple which the Lord built and not man, that the glory of God should fill every living stone of the spiritual building—“Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.”

I take for granted, that those I address have been brought in by the preaching of the gospel, and my object in these lectures is to feed your souls (may God himself feed you) ; truly, few portions of his word contain deeper, more experimental, or precious truth. If we are to grow in Christian life we must live upon the food God has provided—the bread of God. May he teach us to digest it, to appropriate it, to understand it, to enjoy it, that we may be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

Now observe this latter portion of the verse—

“Father, . . . glorify thy Son”—the Father in covenant with Christ was the *author* of all his mediatorial glory. Our blessed Lord invariably attributes this to him ; his whole life’s object on earth was to show forth the glory of his Father ; he gives him all the credit of the salvation he came to accomplish ; “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ;” “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” He would have men read in the tender expressions which *he* uttered, in the gracious acts which *he* performed, the character of the Father who had sent him ; accordingly he prays, “Father, glorify thy Son.” This prayer uttered on earth by Jehovah’s servant now “obedient unto death,” at the throne of the heavenly grace, is the model of the intercession, which, as our risen and accepted representative, the Lord Jesus Christ now carries on above, seated as he is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, on the throne of glory.

“Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son.” How long the Lord Jesus Christ *waited* upon his Father’s will ! For thirty years he lived in privacy, and now for somewhat near three and a half years he had been engaged in public ministry, he had a baptism to be baptized with, and his soul was straitened till it was accomplished. Yet still he waits for his Father’s appointed time to present himself as a sacrifice for the sins of his people. What a picture of patient waiting upon God ! Truly he is an ensample to us in this respect. Observe how Christ *trusted* his Father. Upon the Lord Jesus Christ were laid all the iniquities of the church of God, and with that accumulated load upon his soul he

never questioned his Father's promise to accept his blood as the atonement for all sin. Oh, for more of *his faith* ! We sometimes question whether the grace of God is sufficient to accept the blood of Jesus for our sins ; the Lord Jesus never doubted Jehovah's acceptance of his blood for all the sins of the church of God. Truly he was the author and the finisher of faith. Observe how he cast his *case and his care* upon his Father. He could truly say, " Lord, mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty ; " " I have behaved myself . . . as a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child. " " Father, the hour is come ; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. "

There are *many* petitions in this chapter for the people of God ; but only *one* doth Christ present for himself, " Father, glorify thy Son. " In verse 5 this petition is repeated and expanded ; " And, now, O Father, glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. " Wonderful prayer ! He asks his Father to take *the Son of man* into the position he occupied as the Son of God before his incarnation, that there, as the representative of his people, and as head *of* his church, and head over all things *to* his church, he might rule everything in heaven, and earth, and hell, for their benefit. The prayer means nothing less than *that* ; God only knows how much more it means.

Now I ask your attention to the *petition* itself, " Glorify thy Son, " and to the *arguments* with which the Lord presses it.

" Glorify thy Son. " Our blessed Lord was now

entering into the very heart of God as to the things he had long ago purposed and undertaken to do. See a parallel passage in John xii. 27, 28. Here you have the anticipation of the hour, as you have in the chapter we are considering the arrival of the hour; "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Now the hour had come, the Saviour prays, "Glorify thy Son." The Lord was about to do what no one else could do. He was about to take the whole responsibility of the salvation of the church of God upon his own shoulders; he was about to bear in his own blessed person all the condemnation due to all their sins; he was about to put away sin for ever out of God's sight, on the behalf of all who ever did, or ever would put their trust in him, at the cost of the sacrifice of himself. He was about to make his soul an offering for sin, his own self to bear our sins in his own body upon the tree; he was about to go down into the depths of the wrath of God, and exhaust it, that there might not be one single dreg left for any poor soul, who ever trusted him, to drink. He was about to give himself "the just for the unjust," to bring sinners to God; and to be enabled to effect this was in his loving estimation to be glorified. "Father, *glorify* thy Son."

Oh, brethren! if we could enter more fully into the thought of God as to the real nature, character, and consequences of sin; if we could enter into the thought

of God as to his boundless love for sinners, and then consider how this wondrous being—his own Son—came down from heaven into our nature in order to effect the salvation of sinners, to vindicate the character of the broken law, and to declare the righteousness of God, that he might be just while he is the justifier of him who believeth on Jesus, then should we understand what a glorious position Christ did really occupy, and what a marvellous honour Jehovah bestowed upon him in selecting him to be the manifestation of his grace—the Daysman, to lay his hand upon both. In reference to this we read in Isa. xlii. 1, 6-8, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” “I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and *my glory will I not give to another.*” This was the work he was about to accomplish; and to accomplish it was in his estimation *to be glorified*. Satan, too, the enemy of God and man, was to be overthrown, the Goliath that had defied the armies of the living God was to be trampled under foot, and the Messiah was to do it. Death, the wages of sin, was to be fully paid; it was through death Christ was to destroy him that had the power of death, to abolish death, to extract its sting, to swallow up death in victory, and to rise out of death to die no more, to

impart his own risen life to his people, so that they can die no more, and through faith and by the preaching of his gospel, "to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." This was the work he had in view, and the accomplishing of it was his glory.

"Father, glorify thy Son"—thy love-gift to thy people ; glorify thy Son by now laying upon him the iniquity of them all ; glorify thy Son by accepting the sacrifice he is about to offer to thee ; glorify thy Son, by substituting him for the sins of thy people ; glorify thy Son by sustaining him, by supporting him in the tremendous ordeal he is about to undergo ; glorify thy Son, by bursting the bonds of the tomb and ransoming him from the power of hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption ; glorify thy Son by consecrating him to be thine own High Priest, to transact the affairs of man with God, and of God with man. "Christ *glorified* not himself to be made an high priest ; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee" (Heb. v. 5) ; glorify thy Son by enthroning him at thy right hand, and crowning him as head of the church, and head over all things to the church ; glorify thy Son by sending down the Holy Ghost to those on whose behalf he suffers, that he may comfort them, that he may quicken them, that he may unite them to their risen Head, and be in them "a well of water springing up into everlasting life ;" glorify thy Son by putting all thy foes under his footstool ; glorify thy Son by gathering together thy people to him, as it is written, "unto him shall the gathering of the people be ;" glorify thy

Son by granting him yet in the midst of his redeemed and glorified church to sing praises unto thee and say, 'Behold I, and the children which God hath given me.' This was the spirit and meaning of his prayer, and it was answered. In Eph. i. 19, we read of the "exceeding greatness of his power" which God "wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." If you look at Phil. ii. 9 you read that in consequence of Christ's having poured out his soul unto death, therefore "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Again, "God . . . raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." There is a sweet connection between the glorifying of Christ and the faith and hope of poor sinners.

Now observe *the arguments* with which he pleads that the petition should be granted—they are seven.

The first argument is in verse 1, *His relationship*, "Thy Son," "Glorify thy Son!"

The second is, the aim and object he had in view. *That thy Son also may glorify thee;*" that he may be

the means of expressing and manifesting thy glory, manifesting how kind and great and holy and true thou art, how loving thou art, how merciful thou art, and how great thy glory is in the salvation of thy people. What is glory but the manifestation of what God is, and Christ is the manifestation of this. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." See again, John xiv. 13, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, *that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*" And in Rom. xv. 7 we have a beautiful illustration, "Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, *to the glory of God.*"

The third argument is in verse 2, *the commission* God had given to him, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," therefore glorify him now, and enable him to fulfil this commission.

The fourth argument is in the latter part of the second verse, where he reminds his Father that he had given a beloved people to him in order that he might give eternal life to them. *Those whom thou hast given me!* Ah, they were the objects for whom he came, for whom he lived, for whom he died, for whom he is now enthroned in heaven; those given to him, given to be washed in his blood, given to be clothed in his righteousness, given to be united to his person, and presented unto God "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing to the praise of the glory of God. Father, *glorify the Son* by enabling him to fulfil the trust committed to

his charge, even to give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him—and who are they? Can we set to our seal and say, “Lord, thou hast given *me?*” “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe on his name.*” Glorify thy Son, by enabling him to save them, that thy Son also may glorify thee in accomplishing their salvation.

The fifth we have in verse 4, “*I have glorified thee on the earth.*” Now “Glorify thy Son.” He would have an equivalent for his life spent here on earth for the glory of that Father.

The sixth is that he might bestow that glory upon his people. See verse 10, “*I am glorified in them;*” and again, verse 22, “The glory which thou gavest me I have *given them.*” I said he did not ask for glory as God; he could not receive glory as God. What could increase the glory of God? But he came down here into our nature, and lived and died that he might obtain a glory, even a full equivalent for all that he in his glorious person as God-man, and for all that he suffered in his glorious person as God-man, that he might give that glory to us. The obtaining of this glory was in order that he might bestow it on his people, for “I have given them the glory which thou gavest me.” Observe how the glory of the church, the glory of Christ, and the glory of the Father are all *united.*

The seventh is to be found in verse 4, “I have *finished* the work which thou gavest me to do.”

Now it may well assure our hearts before God to know that the glory of the Father, the glory of the Son,

and the glory of the Holy Ghost, are most secured and displayed in the salvation of poor souls who come with their cares, their need, their sorrows, and their sins, for life, pardon, and salvation, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ accepted for us is the pledge of our glory, Christ dwelling in us the hope of our glory, Christ walking with us the light of glory, Christ on us the garments of glory, Christ's fulness our measure of glory, Christ himself our crown of glory, Christ crucified and raised from the dead is Christ glorified, and Christ glorified, is the Father glorified, the Spirit glorified, the believer glorified, "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

These are deep things; but may He who searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God, instruct us in them for Christ's sake!

3

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—JOHN xvii. 2.

THIS verse contains an argument drawn by our Lord Jesus Christ from the nature and character of the commission with which his Father had entrusted him. He had prayed "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:" the Father was to be glorified by the Son through his accepting, undertaking, and fulfilling

the office of Mediator in order to give eternal life to the people of God ; and the Son was to be glorified by the Father commissioning, sustaining, enabling, and qualifying him to discharge the trust committed to him. To bestow eternal life on lost sinners is the glory of the Father, and to be the means and channel for the bestowal of that eternal life on lost sinners is the glory of the Son. The blessed Saviour here acknowledges this, and pleads it as the motive and object his Father had in view when the Father and the Son entered into mutual covenant engagements for the salvation of the church : "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Oh, for God's own light to enable us to apprehend God's precious truth !

I must again remind you that our Lord is speaking in an official character. He appears before the Father here as the Mediator ; as God he could not pray, as God he could not receive any power that did not belong to him essentially. On the other hand, as the God-man Mediator ; all he possessed was *bestowed* upon him, his office appointed to him in the everlasting covenant between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, his work assigned to him, his qualifications supplied to him, his ability bestowed upon him. Thus the Father was glorified in calling, appointing, and qualifying the Son to be the Saviour of sinners ; and the Son was glorified in undertaking, discharging, and accomplishing the blessed trust. How it should cheer our hearts, establish our faith, and kindle our hope and love, to know that Christ's office of Mediator (which is our security for the

possession of eternal life) is founded on the glory of the Father and the glory of the Son. "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

Let us dwell upon three subjects presented to our consideration in the text:—

I. The extent of the power committed to Christ—"power over all flesh."

II. The avowed object of the Father in committing that power to him—"that he might give eternal life."

III. The persons on whom this eternal life is to be bestowed—"as many as thou hast given to him."

Now first, The power—"power over all flesh." Righteously did the blessed Mediator obtain this power. The Son of God was born of a woman! "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of *flesh and blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the *same*." The Word which was with God, and was God, and without whom nothing was made that was made, "*was made flesh*." Christ suffered in the *flesh*, the just for the unjust, to bring sinners to God. Sin was judged and condemned, as we read (Rom. viii. 3), "in the *flesh*," that is, in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the rent veil of that precious *flesh* he opened a new and a living way of access to God, and in that *flesh* he abolished the enmity—and having given his *flesh* for the life of the world, he rose from the dead and gave his *flesh* to be life to the world. Righteously, then, did he obtain the power which he here asserts he had received.

Sometimes by the expression "all flesh," the Spirit

of God teaches us to understand all mankind ; as you find in Gen. vi. 12, " God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt ; for *all flesh* had corrupted his way upon the earth." Again (Luke iii. 6), "*all flesh* shall see the salvation of God," either to bless him for the grace that led them into the enjoyment of it, or to learn what a grievous thing it was to reject God's gift. Here, then, Christ asserts that he has had committed to him " power over all flesh "—*all mankind*—to rule, to control, to subdue, to restrain, to remove, to convert, to convict, and finally to judge them. " Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass ; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth ; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy ? and where is the fury of the oppressor ?" (Isa. li. 12, 13). We need not fear what man can do unto us, for " thou hast given him power over *all flesh*."

But oftentimes by the flesh is meant the *corrupt* principles and *depraved* faculties of our *fallen nature*. So the Apostle says, " in me, that is, in my *flesh*, dwelleth no good thing." We read, "*the flesh*, lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Again, " The life which I now live *in the flesh*, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Dear child of God, you have no reason to fear the flesh, *that corrupt thing* you carry about with you, and under the pressure of which you groan ; it may be you cannot overcome it, it may be there are risings and swellings in that corrupt heart you

cannot restrain ; but our glorious Christ *can* : “ thou hast given him power over all flesh.” Neither the flesh *without*, though in league with “ principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places,” against which we wrestle ; nor the power of the *flesh within*, though grievous and present, and often apparently set on fire of hell—neither the power without, nor the hidden depths within, can “ separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.” He has power over all flesh. He can subdue it, though I cannot. He can control it, though I cannot. He can bind or loose it, acquit, forgive, judge it, and finally, he can and will change this vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body, “ according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” He can deliver from the bondage of the flesh, and he *will* exercise his prerogative ; for “ thou hast given him power over all flesh, *that he should give* eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”

Observe further, in Matt. xxviii. 18. It is said, “ All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ”—a power he possesses and sways by virtue of his sufferings and the victory he achieved in that *flesh* which he took on him, that “ through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.” We read (Eph. i. 20) that this power “ was wrought in Christ when God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power,

and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Thus our glorious Christ has power over everything that is named, or can be named, in heaven, or earth—in this world, or in that which is to come. Again, in Rom. xiv. 9, we have a similar account of the ground on which this mediatorial power of Christ is received and exercised: "To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

How delightful it is, beloved brethren, to dwell upon the royal attributes of our blessed Christ! What encouragement faith finds in the contemplation, what ground of hope and blissful expectation! All power in heaven and in earth—his! all power over the enemies of our souls—his! all power over that which is within us and contrary to us—his! all power over that which is without us and opposed to us—his! all at his absolute disposal and control,—and bestowed upon him for this very end and object, that nothing might be able to hinder him, or even interfere with him in the discharge of his office, but "that he should give eternal life to as many as God hath given him." The realms of nature, the boundless stores of grace, the fulness of glory, and power over all flesh, are all lodged in the mediatorial hands of God's Christ; no wonder the Apostle says, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." And for this simple reason, they are all in his hands, all at the absolute dis-

posal of Christ; to this end, that he may be in a position to "give eternal life to as many as God hath given him."

II. The second remarkable thing in the text is the *avowed object* of the Father, as acknowledged by the Son, in giving him all this power, "that he should give eternal life." I really know but little what eternal life is, but I know what the Scripture says about it, and by attending to this our minds will be enlightened. I find eternal life to be nothing less than *Christ himself*: in the opening of the First Epistle of John it is so stated, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This, then, is eternal life—fellowship with the Father, union and communion with his Son Jesus Christ!

"That thou shouldest give eternal life"—including the *present* grace and all-sufficiency for the ultimate possession of it. This involves the removal of every obstacle in the way to the glory to be revealed, the setting aside of every hindrance, even though all the powers in earth and hell were united to oppose us. Brethren, if the possession of all power in heaven and earth is sufficient to carry us safely through the wilderness, and finally to make us more than conquerors

through him that loved us. Then truly no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against us in judgment shall be condemned. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, "For thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

But further, it is not enough that the hindrances be taken out of the way, we must be *qualified* to enjoy eternal life; I must have a nature given me suitable to that life—eyes and ears, affections and understanding—else would it be thrown away upon me; but he who gives eternal life as Mediator supplies the qualification for the enjoyment of it, putting away sin, renewing the soul, healing its diseases, conquering death, obliterating blindness, undoing and slaying the enmity, and finally subduing even the flesh itself, till "death is swallowed up of life." "This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life:" Himself—his salvation, his crown—the crown of life, his kingdom—the kingdom of life, fellowship with himself—the power of his resurrection, a life answerable to the great love of God in giving his Christ, a life answerable to the great grace of Christ in giving himself to obtain it, a life answerable to the glory of the Father, the glory of the Son, and the glory of the Holy Ghost, and to the infinite desire of the Godhead, that the people given to Christ should be filled with all the fulness of God. Who can speak of eternal life? A life spent in the favour of God, spent in the presence of God, spent in the image of God, and in the power of God eternally; a life that will satisfy the love of the Father, the love of the Son, the love of the Holy Ghost, and the

immortality of man. Just as eternal death is the sum of all misery, so is eternal life the sum of all bliss. Now the avowed object of the Father in giving all power to Christ was that he might give this eternal life to his people.

III. Lastly, the persons given to him, even "to as many as thou hast given him." So, then, God has given a people to Christ, and "all things are for your sakes." This is the truth which, next to the revelation of Christ himself, shines out most fully in Scripture. For their sakes Christ was incarnate, for their sakes the office of Mediator was appointed, for their sakes Christ died, and rose, and revived, for their sakes all power is committed to him, and for their sakes all power is exercised by him. You have your Bibles, dear friends, and you have the chapter before you, see if these things be not so.

Now remark here:—

I. A fact—a people given to Christ! To take charge of, to undertake for, to wash in his blood, to clothe in his righteousness, to feed them as their Shepherd, to espouse them as their Husband, to lead them triumphantly as the Captain of their salvation, to subdue their corruptions, to put down their foes, to bruise Satan under their feet, to communicate to them his own life, to endow them with his own fulness, to acknowledge them as his own brethren, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." He knows them, though they do not know themselves, and though the discoveries they make of themselves day by day oftentimes startle them, yet their heavenly Saviour knew it all before. He values them—Oh, who can tell at what a price! He gave *himself* for them; he gives himself to them; he rules heaven and

earth for their interests ; he is their appointed Head, and it will be his glory one day “to present them without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” and “to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.”

2. Observe, in the next place, his evident delight in them ; how he dwells on and acknowledges his portion in them again and again,—“as many as thou hast given me.” The language in the original is very peculiar : “Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that to all that he has given him he should give eternal life to them.” “*All that!*” You have the same language exactly in John vi. 37, “All that! the Father giveth me,”—“all that.” The idea is as if he were looking over his portion, thinking how much it was, how rich it was, how delightful it was, all that I have, all this! There is nothing more calculated to bring out the delight the Lord Jesus has in the possession of this gift to him than by noticing how frequently he alludes to it in this prayer. In seven different places he speaks of his Father’s gift of his people to him ; in verse 2, “as many as thou *hast given* him ;” in verse 6, “I have manifested thy name unto the men which *thou gavest me* ;” and again, “Thine they were, and thou *gavest* them me ;” in verse 9, “I pray . . . for them which thou *hast given* me, for they are thine.” Why were they so precious? Apparently for another reason than his own delight in them, his *Father’s* delight in them. “They are thine,” and as thine I prize them as well as because thou gavest them to me. In verse 11, “Keep through thine own name those whom thou *hast given me*.” In verse 12, “Those that thou *gavest* me I

have kept,"—and finally, for the seventh time, in verse 24, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou *hast given* me, be with me where I am."

3. The next thing I would remark here is that the Lord evidently declares that the salvation of those given to him is an object of the Father's glory, and of his own glory; for, in order that he might be enabled to give them the eternal life he was commissioned to give them, he prays, "Father, glorify thy Son, that in the accomplishing of this Thy Son may glorify thee."

4. Lastly; those who are given to Christ have assured safety; they will lack nothing for time, or for eternity; if the fulness of divine grace can satisfy them, they shall be satisfied; if the fulness of divine glory can crown them, they shall be crowned; if the Mediator above can save them, they shall be saved; if God is to be glorified, they shall be glorified. Who are they? We have a description of them (chap. vi. 37), "All that the Father giveth me *shall come to me.*" Here we have their characteristics: they believe on Jesus, they come to Jesus. How is it with you? I cannot read the book of life to see if my name be there; but I can read my name in this book of God, which is the copy of the book of life, and I can know assuredly for the comfort of my own soul that my name is written in the book of life. If I have come to Christ, I have believed on Christ; this is the description of those whom the Father has given to him. He tells us in this prayer (v. 6) that they are those to whom Jehovah *manifests himself.* Have you seen the beauty of Jesus? Have you admired the love of the Father in giving him? Have you learned his name?

gracious and long-suffering, pardoning iniquity, and transgression and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty," making "him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"? This is one characteristic of those the Father hath given to him. Again, (v. 8,) see a further description of them: "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have *received them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they *have believed* that thou didst send me." Here is the Lord's own account of the people given to him. Is it a description of ourselves? Have we received his word? Have we known surely that he came forth from God? Have we believed that the Father did send him? Have we believed that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth* in him should not perish but have everlasting life," and that such an one is of the number given by the Father to Christ, that Christ might give to him eternal life, and for the accomplishing of which end all power in heaven and earth has been given to Christ that nothing might let or hinder him in bestowing, or them in obtaining it? How he pleads for them! He pleads his covenant engagements, he pleads his own relationship, he pleads the favours bestowed upon him, the gifts supplied to him, the avowed object of their salvation, the mutual glory of the Father and the Son.

Oh, pleading Saviour, to whom the Father hath given power over all flesh, overcome our flesh, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, bring down within us all that is contrary to thy Father and to thee, kindle our faith,

brighten our hope, deepen our love, make us more than conquerors in thyself, whilst we hear thee say that thou hast received power over all flesh to give lost sinners who come to thee, and to the Father by thee, *eternal life!*

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

—JOHN xvii. 3.

HAVING expressed all his desire to his heavenly Father in these words, “Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee,” having pleaded his commission and the universal and unlimited power given to him that he might fully discharge his trust, even to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him, our Lord now expresses most fully wherein eternal life doth consist and the means whereby it is to be obtained and enjoyed and this he does in the hearing of his disciples, that they might fully understand what a privilege the Father’s love had purposed for them and for him; for them, that they might know the only true God, and for him, that he might be the means for their attaining to it: “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Thus he manifests and magnifies the glory of the Father by declaring that eternal life consisted in the knowledge of him; and thus he magnifies the grace bestowed on himself, in that power over all flesh was given to him in

order that he might give eternal life to as many as God had given to him.

Life is the perfection of being ; eternal life is the perfection of life ; all life has its fountain-head in God ; he is, and he alone, the living One ; natural life, spiritual life, and eternal life, all flow from him. Natural life is his creation, spiritual life is his inspiration, eternal life is his gift, possessed and enjoyed *in union with himself*, and in the knowledge and fruition of himself and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. As all life flows from God, so it is supported and maintained by God. This is true of natural life (see Psalm civ. 29). "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." It is true of spiritual life,—separation from God is the death of the soul ; as God said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*," spiritual death followed upon disobedience, because sin cut him off from communion with God. It is also true of eternal life,—this is *the life of God* in the soul ; it flows from union with God, and is maintained in the communion and fellowship of God with us and we with God, in the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

Oh, how great and inestimable an existence is life eternal, *the gift* of God's love, *the end* of Christ's coming ! I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly ;" *the fruit* of the inwelling power, energy, and operation of the Holy Ghost, in the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Eternal life is not a faculty (however divine that faculty might be) bestowed upon us *apart* from God ; but a principle laid up in Christ for us, "hid

with Christ in God," and imparted to the soul by the Holy Ghost, in the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Deity himself is the source and fountain-head of it, Jesus Christ is the channel, and the Holy Ghost, the communicating power. Faith is the heaven-born faculty in the soul, by which we see, hear, taste, receive, know, and enjoy God, and Jesus Christ whom God hath sent. You read the record, given to faith, thus "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (1 John v. 11.)

The text is our Saviour's own definition of life eternal: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Let us carefully examine this statement:—

(1) Here is the most excellent knowledge conceivable for it is knowledge which imparts the life of God to the soul. (2) Failing *this*, all other knowledge is ignorance. (3) For *unfallen* beings the knowledge of God *alone* is sufficient for the enjoyment of eternal life; angels that never fell can possibly enjoy him in the immediate vision of his glory; but for sinners, there is no knowledge of God but as associated with *the knowledge of Jesus Christ* whom he has sent. (4) Observe how plainly the equality of the Father and the Son is set before us in this matter of eternal life: "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, *and* Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Dear brethren, the more we know of God the more this eternal life shall energize our souls; the more we know of God the more happiness and peace, and joy, and power, and holiness, and love, and rest, shall be possessed by our

souls, till, "we know even as also we are known." On the other hand, ignorance of God is the death of the soul. You may remember a passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where we read—"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them." It was in order to dispel this ignorance and impart to us the knowledge of God, through his personal manifestation of him, and thus to make us partake of eternal life, that Jesus Christ came: so he states in this address to his Father.

Observe what light is thrown by this passage on Genesis ii. 16-17, where we are told God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." God did not forbid our first parents to eat of the tree of knowledge with a view of depriving them of any good they might obtain by partaking of its fruit, but only to debar them from the *evil*. All that was good *they had*, all that was enjoyable they had; no need to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil to be happy. God himself was their *abundant* good—all that they attained by their disobedience was the knowledge of *evil*, involving condemnation and eternal death. Hence we learn how the love of God provided a means to cancel the condemnation and bestow life eternal, in the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Even the beginning of this knowledge here on earth is eternal life, commenced in grace: for he that believeth *hath* eternal

life, and the consummation of it in heaven by-and-by will be the fruition of eternal glory.

Let me call your attention to the nature and character of this most excellent knowledge, and may be the one aim and end of our lives to attain unto it. *For this* the Scriptures were written; they are the means of attaining to this knowledge. *For this* the Holy Ghost came down from heaven, to enable us to study the Scriptures with minds enlightened, and understanding spiritualized, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." In 2 Pet. i. 3, we read, "His divine power hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, *through the knowledge* of him." From v. 4 we learn that "*by this knowledge* is imparted to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by *these* we might be made partakers of the divine nature." What a comfort is this on the Saviour's words, "this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Yes, truly, in the knowledge of God we become partakers of his divine nature. And again in Col. iii. we are told that "we are *renewed in knowledge*, after the image of him that created us." This knowledge not only imparts the life of God but stamps the image of God upon us, and the more we know him, the more we shall be like him; and when we know as we are known we shall be altogether like him. In Dan. xi. 32, we read "*The people that do know* the God shall be strong, and do exploits." What excellent knowledge this is! Again, Eph. i. 17, the Apostle prays that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit

wisdom and revelation *in the knowledge of him.*" In Pet. i. 2, we read, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you *through the knowledge* of God, and of Jesus our Lord;" not only grace and peace be bestowed upon you, but be *multiplied* unto you in the knowledge of God. These passages seem to open out to us what that eternal life is which we have in the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ. Again, Phil. i. 9, "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more *in knowledge.*" In the knowledge of God we get our *love* God, and not only so but as we know him, our love *abounds more and more*,—love to God, and love to man. What an excellent knowledge this is! In Psalm ix. 10, we have it, "*They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.*" The knowledge of God begets trust in him. Then in that beautiful passage in 2 Tim. i. 12, "*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*" Lastly (2 Pet. i. 8), it is stated that it is this knowledge which causeth us to be neither barren nor unfruitful, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful *in the knowledge* of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we have fruitfulness as well as love, strength, and confidence, abounding grace, and wisdom, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. How great and glorious our God must be, since it is eternal life to know him; indeed our text implies not only that the principle of eternal life is in the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, but also that the knowledge of God is the aim and object of its

existence, and the consummation, and rest, and crown of all its attributes and all its aspirations. How deep, how experimental, and appropriating must this knowledge be, which introduces an eternal life of grace and glory into the soul of its possessor ; and how divinely secure its possession has been made : “Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” Oh for a more abundant knowledge of the living God ; to know him is life eternal ; to be acquainted with him is peace ; his favour is better than life itself, fellowship with him is salvation ! The vision of God is glory ; his word is the foundation of our faith, and hope, and joy, and God himself our portion for ever and ever. With him is the well of life ; in his “presence is fulness of joy” and at his right hand pleasures for evermore. Oh to know him ! to know him in his Fatherhood, to know him as the God of love, to know him as delighting in mercy, to know him as the truth itself, to know him as having so loved this sinful world, that “He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

How precious is this sent One—the Lord Jesus Christ ; his precious *Person*, God-man, the Days-man, laying his hand upon us both ; how precious to know him in his *offices*—Priest in heaven, laying himself out in all fulness to transact our affairs with God. Sending down the Holy Ghost to be our Comforter, a well of living water, springing up within us into everlasting life. The King of grace, and the King of glory,—what a precious

precious Christ he is! it is eternal life to know him. How precious *his engagements!*—undertaking for us, coming down into our nature to accomplish our salvation, paying the debt for us, abolishing death for us, and then rising in the power of an endless life to impart *that* life to us, so that it is “no more we that live, but Christ that liveth in us: and the life we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.” How precious his *commission* to give eternal life in the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, and to rule all things in heaven and earth, so that nothing might hinder our possession and enjoyment of it. Oh for more of this heaven-born knowledge! it is the one thing we want; it would dispel all our fears, it would scatter all our doubts, it would well-nigh dry up all our tears, and it would give us joy unspeakable and full of glory. Why are we so ignorant? alas! alas! is it not because our strength is so feeble?

Faith has a high prerogative, it is the principle in the soul which lays hold upon God, and approaches and enjoys the knowledge of him, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Oh that the Lord would increase our faith! It was in order that he might establish and increase our faith, the Lord uttered these words in the hearing of his disciples; for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

What a life-long study these words unfold to the believer born of the Spirit and taught of God. Sweet

to study him here, it is life begun; it will be glory study him hereafter when we shall know even as all we are known. The knowledge of which Christ speaks is not an intellectual, speculative, theoretical knowledge of doctrines, but an experimental, heart-affecting, life-influencing acquaintance with *the Persons*, the true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

The Lord utters these words to his Father in the hearing of his disciples, that they might understand that his mission was to remove all the obstacles which could by any means interfere with their enjoyed vision of God. For this "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," that he might be made sin for us, and giving himself for us, might thus put away for ever that which formed the real barrier. For this the brightness of the Father's glory was revealed that his unveiled face might be seen (because a veil of unbelief covered poor sinners' hearts), and for this the Holy Ghost was sent, and "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

It was a deep sense of these things which made the great Apostle of the Gentiles count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. No attainment here on earth seemed to satisfy him. Still his cry was evermore, "That I *know* him, and the power of his resurrection." (Phil. i. 10.)

Now, everything is to give place to, and shall make way for this great end, every obstacle interposed by

world, the flesh, or the devil, between God and our hearts, Christ will take away; all other considerations are secondary to this great purpose, and shall in nowise hinder it. Christ is commissioned to give eternal life, and this eternal life is the knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom God hath sent. If clouds arise from our own souls Christ will remove them; whatsoever oppositions from self, Christ will remove them; if we set up idols in our hearts, Christ will remove them; if self-ease, Christ will conquer it; if pleasure, Christ will kill it. Thank God he will! The purpose is, we are to know God—to enjoy and possess him; and all things that come between us and God, whether they be enemies from without, or unbelief and ignorance from within, the Lord Jesus Christ is commissioned, and has undertaken, to remove. And we may say confidently with the Apostle Paul, “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Oh, what a panorama of glory this subject opens out to us! Here we have God manifesting himself, the Father loving, the Son stooping, the Holy Ghost descending, knowledge increasing, ignorance dispelling, heaven opening, Satan falling, man rising, till he loses himself in the fruition of life eternal; knowing as he is known, and evermore enjoying all the fulness of God.

"I have glorified thee on the earth."—JOHN xvii. 4.

OUR blessed Lord is here engaged in prayer. He evidently opens his whole heart to his Father; his petitions are wonderful; first for himself, and then for "those whom thou hast given me." As Aaron appeared before the Lord in the most holy place, with the names and circumstances, and conditions of Israel borne upon his heart on the breast-plate of judgment, for a memorial before the Lord continually, so Christ appears before God in this prayer; a greater than Aaron is here; Christ is all in all, the altar, the sacrifice, the incense, the priest and intercessor, all in himself; and he here presents himself before his Father's throne in all the inestimable worth, preciousness, and perfection of his mediatorial work and office; he pleads "I have glorified thee on the earth." Truly this prayer and this pleading did ascend into the very Holy of Holies, and perfume the heaven of heavens for evermore.

Now it is of the utmost importance that we should understand, as it is also the perfection of blessedness that we should realize:

I. Who and what is the glorious Person here pleading with the Father.

II. The circumstances under which he thus pleads.

III. The ground on which he rests his plea.

I. The person of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest of all the revealed mysteries of God; he was and ever will be God and man in one person, the eternal Son of

the Father, one essential being in the infinite essence of the Deity ; the Word of God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made, was made flesh and dwelt among us ; the Son of the Father became the Son of man also, and, as such, he was "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person" here on earth : "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14) ; "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2. 9.) Therefore, the majesty, the holiness, the blessedness, the preciousness, and the glory of the God-man, Christ Jesus, can never be conceived or expressed ; the Father's love for him, and his delight in finishing the work which the Father gave him to do, is utterly beyond conception ; his love to sinners in working for them, in dying for them, in giving for them, must be infinite, and the dignity of his person must stamp eternal value, power, and efficacy upon his words and upon his works.

II. Then the circumstances under which he here presents himself before God. That Christ undertook the office of mediator between God and man, and consented to take our nature and our place, was in consequence of covenant stipulations, engagements, and settlements between his Father and himself. If he, who was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh ; if he humbled himself to suffer death upon the cross, he was also to see of the travail of his soul, and to be satisfied in the salvation of those for

whom he was born, for whom he lived, and for whom he died. The Father covenanted to accept his offering, the Son covenanted to present his whole self upon the altar of divine justice as an offering and atonement for sin, and the Holy Ghost undertook to reveal this great salvation and apply it with power to the hearts of those whom the Father had given to Christ.

Now this covenant runs all through Scripture. You remember the 89th Psalm, from verse 19 and onward all refers to Christ: "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." (The King of Israel, David, was but a picture, and type, and shadow of the David meant here.) "With whom my hand shall be established, mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and *my covenant* shall stand fast with him. Then observe this precious part of the covenant: "If his children shall forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions

with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. *My covenant* will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." This is the Father's part of the covenant. Christ's part was to glorify him upon the earth. Now David well knew this language was not intended to have its fulfilment and fruition in himself. In II. Sam. xxiii. we read: "These be the last words of David. The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, Be thou ruler—as it is in the margin—over men, just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." A beautiful picture of the kingdom, glory, and majesty of the Lord Jesus! "Although," David adds, "my house be *not* so with God; yet he hath made with me an *everlasting covenant*, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." You remember in Acts xiii. the Apostle Paul teaches that the promises to David were fulfilled when God raised Christ from the dead, because this was the seal and confirmation of the everlasting covenant. Again (Isa. xlii. 1-8): "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the

street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it: he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and the spirit to them that walk therein; I the Lord have called thee"—he is speaking to Christ—"the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a *covenant* of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." This was God's part of the covenant,—his engagement to Christ: Christ's engagement was to glorify him on the earth.

Then, if we turn to the prophet Malachi ii. 4-6,—“That my covenant might be with Levi;” here the true Levi is meant, the Lord Jesus Christ. “My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.”

In Luke i. we come to the fulfilment (verses 68-75) in the song of Zacharias:—“Blessed be the Lord God

of Israel ; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David ; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began : that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his *holy covenant* ; the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we *being delivered* out of the hand of our enemies *might serve him without fear*, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." This was the provision of the covenant ; God's part being to give his Son ; the Son's part being to glorify him upon the earth ; and the Spirit's part to reveal and apply this salvation to the hearts of his people, by his word and by his grace. Lastly, we find God revealing himself by his Spirit in a new covenant character, as the God of *peace* :—"The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the *blood of the everlasting covenant*, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will." (Heb. xiii. 20.) Such were the circumstances under which the Lord^e Jesus Christ prayed to his Father.

III. Observe the ground upon which he rests his plea,—“ I have glorified thee on the earth.” See, he reads the performance of his part of the contract. He was at this time standing, bound with the cords of everlasting love, beside the altar of burnt-offering. The last act was as good as done ; he was on his way to Gethsemane ; he stands at the bar of God's justice.

faithfulness, and holiness ; he represents his people, and he gives them the whole benefit and credit of all the infinite merit belonging to his person, work, and office as mediator, in his life and in his death ; and, *on that ground*, he claims an equivalent from his Father's justice for himself as their Head, and for his people as members of his body ; for himself as the Son, and for them those whom the Father had given him,—the people of his love, on whose behalf he had descended from heaven to earth to glorify his Father.

“ I have glorified thee on the earth.” I conceive that these were the greatest words ever spoken here below, even by the Lord Jesus Christ himself ; and I am sure if we could enter into all their fulness we should be convinced that this is true. Who can express them in their height, and depth, and length, and breadth ? “ I have *glorified* thee on the earth, my Father ; I have done so according to the good pleasure of thy will, according to the riches of the glory of thy grace, and according to the covenant engagements between me and thee, performed all that was in thine heart, and all that thou didst require of me for the accomplishing of the salvation of thy people given to me ; I have opened all thine heart to the poor sinners ; I have manifested thy faithfulness to thy promises ; I have displayed the riches of the grace thou didst bestow on a lost world ; I have come down from heaven to *make known* the holiness of thy nature and thine unspeakable gift ; I have magnified the perfection of thy law by descending from heaven to obey it ; I have demonstrated thy justice and thine abhorrence

to the uttermost, for I am about to lay down my life on the cross to expiate it ; I have revealed and displayed thine infinite love, for thou didst so love the world that thou didst give thine only-begotten Son, that thou mightest be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. This I have done ; and all that remains to be done I am prepared to do and fulfil to the uttermost. Look upon the Son of thy right hand ; upon the Son of man whom thou hast made so strong for thyself. Thou knowest me, Father, that I am thy fellow, thou God of Hosts ; thou King of Saints ; thou knowest the honour I have done to thy law by being born under it, and by my obedience unto death to expiate the guilt of those who transgressed against it ; thou knowest the preciousness of my blood,—thou knowest its eternal efficacy to put away sin ; thou knowest that I have more than vindicated the dishonour done to thy name, thy character, thine attributes, and thy will. I have glorified thee on the earth ; that earth so long a land of darkness to thee,—that earth so long in the hands of the usurper,—that earth which has been so long arrayed in arms against thee ; I have glorified thee here, and I will glorify thee again.”

Oh, brethren ! no one but the Son of God himself could have truly uttered what is here expressed ; not all the angels and archangels in Jehovah's presence, even though they excel in strength, though they do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word ; not all those ministers of his, that do his pleasure, could say individually or collectively, “I have glorified thee” in heaven or earth : the great Jehovah has glorified *them*

and glorified himself in them and by them, but they never glorified nor could they glorify him who “dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto;” his name, his blessedness, his truth, his majesty are beyond all expression and surpass all thought; he is the God of glory, and he cannot but be what he is—essential, happy, holy, glorious, and incomprehensible: universal nature, the course of Providence, the displays of grace—even Christ himself could add nothing to God’s essential glory. It is utterly impossible. God is most blessed for evermore, and his glory is incapable of increase or decrease; and, therefore, while we desire so to explain those words, as to put immortal crowns upon the head of the mediator, we must take heed in doing so not to overlook the essential glory of the Godhead, which even He could only manifest but not increase.

Man’s sin did not and could not diminish it in the most remote degree. The clouds that flit across the noon-day sun may hide his beauty, but cannot mar his splendour; the moon, that beautiful satellite, made to reflect his light, may eclipse, but cannot add one beam to his glory; so sin did rise up, as a dark cloud, and shut out the light, and beauty, and glory of God from our creation, casting back its midnight shadow—its darkness that might be felt—its death-pall upon the hopes, happiness, and destinies of man. It was to remove that cloud, and to put away that sin by the sacrifice of himself, Jesus Christ came, and, through the rent veil of his own crucified body, he opened a new and a living way even for the chief of sinners, to God, to holiness, and to rest. It was through that veil, rent from the top

the bottom, the glory in the Holiest shone forth, lighting and encouraging sinners to come boldly to the throne of Grace ; and thus it was that the Lord Jesus glorified God on the earth. We read in Isa. lix. 2, "our iniquities have separated between you and your God." *These* were the clouds that had risen from beneath and passed across the ineffable glory of Jehovah, veiling him from mortal eye, and Jesus came down to atone for them by the sacrifice of himself. The crucifixion of the Lord of glory, and the atoning death of the Prince of Life, was not the extinguishing of a lesser glory, as the light of a star put out by the sun, but it was the glory of a sun hiding itself under the dark cloud of our sin, that the holiness of God might shine out and be glorified by his eclipse ; as if one king did descend from his throne to do honour to another king, thus in substituting of himself, as a curse for us, in emptying himself of the glory he had with his Father before the world was, and coming down to be spit upon, rejected, and crucified here on earth, the Lord Jesus did remove the cloud that obscured the glory of his Father, and, at the cost of the eclipse of himself, could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth."

They are wonderful words. It was not only from the time the Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but from the morning of all time he had been the glorifier of his Father. Creation was the handiwork of Christ. "Thou wast in the beginning" (to the Son he saith it), "hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure ; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment ;

as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." And he that made all things doth *up*, creation by the word of his power, therefore creation itself is but Christ's manifestation of the glory of God one way, and providence is Christ's manifestation of the glory in another way. How early he began to glorify his Father by manifesting his wondrous ways and words and his thoughts which were to us-ward; how soon he began to make it evident that his delights were with the sons of men, and that creation and providence were the circumstantials by which Jehovah surrounded his creature he delighted to honour; that the visible universe itself was but a home for man—a platform on which he purposed to manifest to him all his grace and all his glory! See him walking in the garden with Adam; feasting in the tent with Abraham; wrestling, suffering himself to be overcome by Jacob; speaking face to face, as a man speaks to his friend, with Moses; bearing his people of Israel out of Egypt as upon eagle's wings; as Captain of the host of God leading them through the wilderness. The *manna* that fed them was Christ; *the rock* that followed them was Christ; *the pillar-cloud* that guided them was Christ. And as he was their companion in the wilderness so he was afterwards their companion in the furnace. "The fourth," in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, walking in the midst of the fire, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego "was like the Son of God."

Who was it that sent the prophets, rising up and sending them? It was Jesus; and the testimony

us was the spirit of prophecy. Who was it that sent messengers from time to time to his tried and troubled people, suiting the word of hope, or comfort, or faith, to their varied necessities? It was Jesus! How often in times of danger, we read, "Fear not;" how often, in times of difficulty, "I will be with thee;" how often in seasons of sorrow, "I, even I, am he that comforteth you;" how often, in seasons of desolation, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee;" how often, in periods of sin and shame, "I, even I, am he that bloteth out thy transgressions;"—till at last he came himself, and the angels of God sang the song of his divinity, "Glory to God in the highest"—he did not begin to glorify God then, but it was a new phase of "Glory to God *in the highest*, on earth peace, and good will toward men."

What was his whole life here but a continued manifestation of the glory of the Father? When Philip said to him, "Shew us the Father," what was his answer? "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known *me*, Philip? He that hath seen *me hath seen the Father*." Now only the crowning, was to be accomplished,—nothing remained for him but to lay down his life, "the just for the unjust, to give glory to God." And thus he provided the best of all the high crowns of God—the crown of glory of his grace, *the crown of our salvation*. This, and a thousand times more than this, more than any angel or mortal tongue could tell, the mediator gathers up into this one plea, "Father, *I glorified thee on the earth*." There is the set-off

against man's sin, *there* is the set-off against the honour done to God's character, God's law, and God's truth. Put this in the one scale, and all that the creature could do is but as the small dust in the other.

"I have glorified thee on the earth." May faith upon that plea, and come with boldness to the throne of grace, seeing that he who glorified Jehovah on earth is now seated on his throne, with open arms, to welcome those who have *never* glorified him,—that they may come in, and receive, and enjoy *the great salvation* which the God of all love and all grace has provided them in the Son of his love.

6

"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

JOHN xvii. 4.

THE Lord is still pleading in reference to his Father's covenant engagements with him as mediator. Already we have considered the plea: "I have glorified thee on the earth." Now let us consider his further plea: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (How blessed to listen to those words, truly it is everling life to know them, and peace that passeth all understanding to realize them.

See, he claims the Father's recognition of the fact that he had *fulfilled* the salvation-work assigned to him, and in consideration of which his Father had engaged to accept him as the representative and Saviour of the people, to "raise him from the dead, and set him at

at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come ;" *there* to invest him with power in heaven and earth, to be administered on his behalf, *there* to put "all things under his feet, and to make him to be head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all," in order that his people's "faith and hope might be in him" (1 Peter i. 21), and that nothing, visible or invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, should be able to let or hinder him in being "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him ;" or, in other words, receive him, for to receive is to obey,—or, believe him, for to believe is to obey,—and is therefore called "the obedience of faith." (Rom. xvi. 26.)

Now he declares, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." It was as good as done, he was about to be "wounded for our transgressions, and punished for our iniquities," that the chastisement of our peace might be laid upon him. One man's disobedience had brought sin into the world, and death by sin ; he, by one obedience unto death, was about to bring in everlasting righteousness, and the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.

"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." It was not only during his earthly ministry the crucified Lord Jesus Christ, the mediator, did work. He would say (John v. 17), "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Every manifestation of God from the

beginning was by Jesus Christ ; every communication from God to man from the beginning was through Jesus Christ. From the time the promise was given in Eden,—“the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head,”—his work began ; and earlier than that, for if you look at Prov. viii., where undoubtedly Christ, “the wisdom of God,” is speaking, he says, “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth ; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth : while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the depths of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above ; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep ; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment : when he appointed the foundations of the earth then I was by him, as one brought up with him : and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him ; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth ; and my delights were with the sons of men.” Our blessed Lord was the agent in creation, all things visible and invisible were made by him ; he was the pattern, the model after whose image and likeness Adam was created ; and before Adam and Eve acknowledged their sin, or repented of their transgression, he was “the Lamb slain” for them “from the foundation of the world.” What was “the tree of life in the midst of the garden” but an emblem of Christ.

What were the "coats of skin" with which God covered the nakedness of our first parents but early pictures of the righteousness of Christ, covering our nakedness at the cost of the life of him who procured it? Whose voice was it that brought conviction of sin, and promise of redemption to our first parents? It was the voice of Jesus.

Go through the Old Testament history, and we find it in all the communications of God with men. What was that bow encircling the heavens—the pledge to Noah and his posterity that the deluge should no more cover the earth—signify? it was a picture of Christ! What was the ark that saved them? a picture of Christ! When came that grand ceremonial law, which from the beginning to the end told of Christ. What were all its sacrifices but pictures of Christ? its altars, its tabernacle, its temple, all told of Christ, till at length the babe of Bethlehem was born.

What was his whole earthly life but one continued preparation about his Father's business? Hear his first discourse in the synagogue of Galilee: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Every miracle he wrought was an illustration and pledge of the work he came to do; when he opened the blind eyes, unstopped the deaf ears, cast out devils, and raised the dead, it was but a continued illustration of his great salvation-work. He was about to give sight to blind souls, and hearing to deaf souls;

he was to cast out demons from possessed souls, to raise dead souls, and to bring universal nature to his feet. His miracles were pledges of his power to save. "Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."

But, "I have *finished* the work which thou gavest me to do." Those blessed hands were about to be bound; those feet that went about doing good were soon to be pierced; the brow, "fairer than the children of men," was now to be crowned with thorns, the emblem of earth's curse. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake . . . thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," so the sentence ran, and men plaited a crown of thorns to crown the Saviour with. Little knew they what they did. The gentle heart, ever wont to pour forth love, was to break at Calvary; nothing remained but this. "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He speaks of it as done, and it was as good as done. Verses 11, 12.—He speaks of himself as one passed out of the world at that time: "And now I am no more in the world, but those who are in the world, and I am come to thee." So completely was he laid upon the altar, his whole self was there, his whole heart, and thought, and soul were there.

Let me call your attention to four things. They are the subject for great and everlasting praise; they are sources of infinite and inexhaustible comfort.

I. We have a work given to Christ and undertaken by him. It was salvation-work. Now, clearly, it was

described work ; it was a *definite* work ; it was a *complete* work ; there was no uncertainty about it. " *The work which thou gavest me to do.*" We have a beautiful summary of this work in Dan. ix. 24, the great prophecy of the Messiah : " Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." This was the work given by the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ to do ; and this was the work he now declares himself to have finished. See the evil to be dealt with in its threefold aspect,—iniquity," "transgression," and "sin" ; evil, in the principle, in the character, and in the practice ; sin, as a crime, as a debt, and as a disease ; and all dealt with by the glorious Christ, and in this way *he* was "to finish the transgression." How did he do that ? By fulfilling the law. The law demanded two things,—obedience, and, failing obedience, satisfaction. Christ met the law both ways ; he obeyed it to the uttermost, and he rendered infinite satisfaction on the behalf of those who had transgressed it. He finished the transgression—put it out of the way, so that God can never look at any sinner standing before him in Christ, as chargeable with a single transgression.

Again, he was "to make an end of sin." What a wonderful expression ! To seal it up. The original gives the same idea as that in Rev. xx. 3, where Satan is put up in prison, and a seal put upon him that he might do no further harm. Thus the mediator was to deal with

sin, to make an end of sin, to shut it up, to put it away, to abolish it, to take it out of God's sight *for evermore*. How little we enter into the fulness of Christ's great salvation!

Again, he was "to make reconciliation"—to expiate—to make atonement—"for iniquity;" to satisfy the justice of God; to meet and suffer the righteous sentence pronounced against iniquity. We know how he did this—by giving up himself, "the just for the unjust." "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What wondrous incarnation of love and power Christ appears to the mind and heart of the believer, while we listen to him uttering such words as these!

But he had to do more. He was "to bring in an everlasting righteousness." Himself! the righteousness of God, he was to bring in, to our emptiness, to our poverty, to our ruin, to our death, nay, more, he was to bring in this everlasting righteousness, into the very heaven of heavens, for our benefit and in our behalf to bring it in meritoriously, actually, effectually, absolutely and acceptably; everlasting righteousness, from everlasting and to everlasting. In Rom. iii. 21 we read "Now the righteousness of God without the law manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God"—there is this everlasting righteousness—"which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned,"—therefore all need it. See also 2 Cor. v. 21: "God hath made him to be sin for us,—that is in our place—" who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He was "to bring in everlasting righteousness" for us.

Again, he was to "seal up the vision and prophecy;" that is, to *consummate* them, to ratify them, fulfil them, to secure all their precious promises, and preserve them for his people—because a seal protects and preserves. All that rich treasury of promise to be obtained, fulfilled, secured, and laid up for his people; all that rich salvation he was pledged to accomplish and to apply; all those visions that patriarchs and righteous men desired to see, the Lord Jesus was to embody, to fulfil, to accomplish, to consummate. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," and when he came, he fulfilled to the utmost all the conditions of all the promises; he became the substance of all the shadows, and he was the glory of all the visions.

Finally, and most glorious, "to anoint the Most Holy." I need not tell you there is an allusion here to the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and in the Temple, that most holy place the sanctuary of God, where his throne was between the wings of the cherubim, the mercy seat, Jehovah's habitation; where he held intercourse with Israel; where the great High Priest ministered, and the glory was revealed. What a costly structure it was! what care was bestowed upon it! what a variety of materials it was composed of! The plan was God's own; the materials were all appointed by him; the workmen inspired by him; the pattern given by him, how carefully it was covered with many coverings; how wondrously furnished and anointed! What was it a picture of? for it was but a picture, "a pattern" of something in the heavens. Compare two passages of God's word, and you will see what it meant. See

Exod. xxv. 8, "Let them make me a sanctuary, that may dwell amongst them." Lev. xxvi. 11, 12, "I will set my tabernacle among you; and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

The Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle was the sanctuary. It accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings till it was superseded by the grander Temple when they become dwellers in the land of promise. Be it still, whether in the Tabernacle or the Temple, the Most Holy place was Jehovah's immediate dwelling-place. His throne was there. Now compare 2 Cor. vi. 16, "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The Most Holy in the Tabernacle and in the Temple was the picture of the great idea that lay very very near to the heart of God. He had built a house for man; fair and beautiful was it; but his purpose was also to build a house for himself—an habitation for God—built not with such materials as suns and stars, and skies and worlds, but with living stones, even redeemed, rejoicing, loving hearts. He laid the foundation in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the only begotten Son of God. We read, (Eph. ii. 20,) "Ye are . . . built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Yes; sinners believing on the Lord Jesus Christ a

iving stones," gathered out of the quarry of nature, mented by the blood of Christ into this building, hich, when it is complete, Jehovah himself shall fill, habiting there the praises of his people for evermore, vealing to heaven and earth, and to angels and to men e sanctuary of God, where he would dwell for ever, d rest in his love, communing there with his creation, d, "by the church, making known to the principalities d powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom d God." If the Most Holy place of old was glorious, hat think you will be the glory of this sanctuary which e Lord Jesus Christ has anointed,—a throne of grace d glory, an habitation for the Most High God; rned with all his fulness, provided with all his ces, defended by all his omnipotency, adorned with l his attributes, a praise through all the universe, mired by all creation, a monument of what his love uld do, of what his power could do, of what his Christ uld do, to the praise and the glory of Father, Son, d Holy Ghost, for ever and for ever. Well might the ophet say, "A glorious high throne from the beginning the place of our sanctuary." (Jer. xvii. 12.)

II. "I have *finished* the work." So he pleaded; and urther looking backward upon the earth, where his ork was over; or forward to the glory, where he was "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," he eads with his Father, "I have finished the work which ou gavest me to do." Oh! is there a burdened soul ening to me, will you dwell upon these words? he work given," by the Father to the Lord Jesus rist is *altogether finished*, "the transgression" *finished*,

the making an "end of sin" *finished*, the "making reconciliation for iniquity" *finished*, the bringing in the righteousness of God, the "everlasting righteousness" *finished*, the "sealing up the vision and prophecy" *finished*; the Scripture is fulfilled, the foundation the Most Holy is laid, and the topstone shall be Christ—and you and I poor sinners, who believe, are the living stones of the building,—redemption *finished*, the types and the shadows *finished*, forgiveness sealed and *finished*, the separation which sin had made between the sinner and God, and between the members of the body of Christ, *finished*, the distance annihilated, those "who were afar off made nigh by the blood of Christ." "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

III. This was no *light* work, all the angels in heaven could not have accomplished it. Jehovah is represented in the prophecy of Isaiah as wondering that there was no man to accomplish it. "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." It was no *insufficient* work; the Lord Jesus left nothing for us to do, nothing for angels to do, in order to the completion of that which he had undertaken to accomplish. "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." It was no *disappointing* work; it did not disappoint the Father, it did not disappoint the Son, or he would not have pleaded "I have finished it;" it did not disappoint the Holy Ghost, and it will not disappoint you; "For the Scripture saith Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed"

Romans x. 11.) It was no *uncertain* work ; some people seem to think and speak of it as if its completion depended upon whether they consented or not. Ah ! my friends, Christ's work was no *uncertain* work, nor is it an *unsatisfying* work ; try it ; God tried it ;—" Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a *tried* stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, and he that believeth shall not make haste." Devils tried it in vain ; judgment tried it ; death itself tried it, but the grave would not hold him ; and many a poor sinner has tried ! Oh ! brethren ; he that falls upon this stone shall be broken, (even though his may be a hard heart ;) " but upon whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." Lastly ; it was no *unnecessary* work ; without this work of Christ being undertaken and finished no sinner could be saved ; you cannot reach heaven by any other way, you cannot approach God in any other name ; do not talk about your works, your prayers, your intentions, your charity. It is written, " I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." And now, the Father is satisfied, the Son is satisfied, and the Holy Ghost is satisfied. I ask you, in the presence of God, individually, *are you satisfied with Christ as your "all in all" for acceptance with God ?* I tell you the issues of eternity hang upon your answer.

IV. " I have finished the work which *thou gavest me to do.*" The whole mediatorial work and office of Christ was appointed and provided for by the Father ; thus he glorified himself, and thus he glorified Christ, and through this work will he glorify whosoever believes and

claims this finished work of Christ as the Father's gift and pledge for the salvation of lost sinners. Observe how, by the person and work of Christ, Jehovah vindicated his wisdom in creating man.

1. The life of Christ on earth has proved that sin is no necessity of our nature ; here was a true man without sin.

2. The life of Christ proved that sin is no consequence of the circumstances in which we are placed. Christ was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin ;" such is the record concerning him.

3. By the Lord Jesus Christ's life and work our God has vindicated his goodness in eternally punishing those who sin against him ; for he has provided and proclaimed such a salvation as "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Oh, brethren, what an aggravation of sin is the rejection of that offer, the neglect of that Christ, the refusal of that salvation ! And yet how many of the sons and daughters of men live in the practical neglect and rejection of Christ. Was there ever such a message as he brings ? Was there ever such a salvation accomplished as that he has finished ? Were there ever terms so easy as, Believe and live ? Were there ever such cogent motives—"God *so loved* the world that *he gave* his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ?

4. Through the work of Christ, God has proved that he can be just while he is "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

5. And thus, too, God has vindicated his righteousness

s in raising poor sinners from the dunghill, and
 ting them at his own right hand in the heavenly
 zes. What doth not union with the Son of God
 tle me to, and qualify me for, and if I myself, my
 piness and my glory, are to be the reward of "the
 ail of his soul," what crowns too bright, what
 ydoms too glorious, what majesty too divine to be
 owed upon me as the reward of what Christ did and
 ered for me? *Look* at God's commended love to you
 Christ Jesus; *come* to the marriage feast he has pre-
 ed for you in Christ Jesus; *listen* to his appeal to
 for while Christ pleads with his Father, "I have
 ified thee on the earth; I have finished the work
 ch thou gavest me to do," the Father by those
 er words appeals to you, for "herein is love; not that
 oved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to
 he propitiation for our sins." Oh, wondrous love of
 in Christ, following us evermore through evil report
 good report, and resting for ever where it delights to
 ll!

Like some bright river that from fall to fall
 Through many a maze descending—bright through all,
 Finds some fair region where each labyrinth passed,
 In one full lake of light it rests at last.

7

“*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*”—JOHN xvii. 5.

ALREADY the Lord had prayed, “glorify thy Son.” meant, as you will remember, that his Father would please to support, sustain, and accept him in tremendous ordeal he was to undergo: he was about to offer his soul a sacrifice for sin, to be wounded for transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and to have chastisement of our peace laid upon himself, that by stripes we might be healed; he was about to sustain his own blessed person the curse due to the sins of all people; to be made answerable for all the iniquities, transgressions, and sins of all who ever did or ever would trust in him. This was the baptism with which he was to be baptized, and his soul was “straitened till it was accomplished.” To be permitted to render this atonement by the sacrifice of himself was, in the Father’s loving estimation, to be glorified; and the Father’s acceptance of his offering and of his undertaking to save his redeemed the benefit of the travail of his soul was, in his estimation, to be crowned with glory. We have a precious proof that it was so in Heb. ii. 9, where we read, “Jesus . . . was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,” and “crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

The petition he now presents is altogether different

here pleads to be glorified, not *on earth* as it is in the
 ner case, but *in heaven*; to be glorified, not in
 offering, but on the ground of suffering, and as having
 finished the work which as mediator he had under-
 taken.

Our blessed Lord appears before his Father, here,
 the commissioned mediator, to whom power over
 flesh had been given, and not only so, but as having
 completely, effectually, and absolutely finished the work
 assigned to him; his language is, "Now, O Father,
 glorify thou me . . . with the glory which I had with
 thee before the world was:" he seems to say, Father,
 thou knowest the understanding existing between us,
 in consideration of which I endure the cross, despising
 shame; thou knowest, Father, thine own covenant
 engagements, that on the condition of my making an
 offering for the sins of thy people acceptable to thy
 holiness, thy holiness, and thy truth, thou wouldst raise
 me up into the glory which I had with thee before the
 world was, that I might rule heaven and earth on their
 behalf, and dispense eternal life to as many as thou
 hast given me. Now, Father, the hour is come, and
 my work *is finished*, I am about to lay down my life
 in offering, and myself a whole burnt offering, a
 perfect offering on the altar of the cross, and I claim as
 recompense of my life-labour and the reward of
 entire obedience unto death, to be now glorified,
 that mine whole self, mine whole Person, my *man-
 hood* shall be taken up into the glory which, as Son
 of God, I possessed with thee before the world was.
 What a prayer!

There are *four* great and essential principle Gospel truth brought out in our text, so distinctly so simply that he that runs may read.

I. That before all worlds our glorious Saviour associated with the Eternal God in his essential g In the opening of the Gospel by St. John and in opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews this great t is stated very simply. It is well, in such days as t we live in, to have our minds fully established a who he was who bowed the heavens and came dow save us. The higher and more worthy our view him, the greater will be our appreciation of his salvat and the more we understand him who loved us, greater will be our confidence and the repose of souls in him. In the Gospel of John i. 1, we read, the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was God." Here we have hi the uncreated glory with the Father before the w was. In Hebrews i. 2, we have this account, "his whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by w also he made the worlds; who being the brightnes his glory, and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power, wher had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the r hand of the Majesty on high."

II. This leads us to the second great fact. glorious Saviour who was with the Father, in the g before the world was, did suffer that glory to be *eclip* "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among "The brightness of the Father's glory, the express im of his Person," that he might purge our sins with

blood, came down into our nature, was made flesh, dwelt among us. "We beheld," says the Evangelist, "his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father:" but it was beheld in flashes only, for the glory was veiled in flesh. The Apostle evidently alludes to the time when, upon the Mount of Transfiguration, with Peter and James, he beheld the glory of the Mediator.

III. The Lord Jesus here pleads with his Father to be *reinstated* in glory, even the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. Now he did not pray thus for himself. As the only begotten Son, Jehovah's Fellow, he could not receive either power or glory not already essentially his own; the Godhead is incapable of any increase of glory or addition of happiness; but as God-mediator all was received, all was bestowed; our Lord is here speaking as the God-man, our blessed Saviour, bone of our bone, not more truly God than he was man, and he prays as man to be taken up *personally* in that human nature he descended from heaven to assume, and to be reinstated in the essential glory that, as the Son of God, he had with the Father before the world was.

Oh, what a mysterious Person is Christ! God-man and the glorious Person, but man—true man—enshrined more in the essential glory of the Godhead. It is amazing grace, and the Spirit in revealing it, has shown us what eye hath not seen, or ear heard, nor ever entered into the heart of man to conceive.

IV. But there is a fourth principle brought out here: as we contemplate these truths we seem to ascend to a

climax, and I think this is the summit. "A mediator not a mediator of one." Christ in his manhood represents his church. He is the head of his mystical body and cannot be separated from it. Now turn with me for a moment to 1 Cor. xii. 12: "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." Christ is a mystical body, and the head thereof never be separated from his members, nor his members separated from him. Again, verse 26: "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members one of another." When the Lord Jesus Christ made his soul an offering for sin, he did it as the representative of his whole body; and his covenant arrangement with the Father was that his offering should be accepted for his whole body, and now he claims to be exalted in his human nature into the glory which he had with his Father before the world was; and the light which falls down from that glory tells us that "if one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it." If it be so, what a divine and unutterable petition was the prayer of our mediator, "Glorify thou me, O Father, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

It was a prayer of *faith*—a faith that embraced the purposes and promises of the everlasting covenant. It was a prayer of *hope*; it looked out beyond the wilderness, beyond the conflict with death and the devil, beyond the wrestling against flesh and blood, and

ers of the darkness of this world, in which both was engaged and his people, into the bright sunlight of the glory that was beyond. It was a joyous prayer which "the joy set before him" was never more than when he uttered it. And oh! it was a prayer of *love*; he speaks as mediator: the salvation, the triumph, and the glory of his people was inseparable from his own. When he prayed "Glorify thou me," he prayed as head of his church; the God-man was included and in that manhood *all the members* of his mystical body.

Now, the prayer of our Lord has been answered. He is in the glory. You remember (Acts iii. 13) how the Holy Spirit brought the tidings down: "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, *hath glorified his Son Jesus.*" Nay, the Apostle who had been in the third heaven tells us, in 2 Cor. ii. 9, 10, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." *There* is the full answer to his prayer; "Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And what saith the Spirit? "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"—*in his body*. What an object of hope, for triumph, for praise, and for glory is our Emmanuel! "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," and all fulness *doth dwell in him*, and the soul that receives him is complete in him who is the head of all principality and power, and of whose fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

Moreover, not only is the fact that his prayer is

answered, but the steps by which he ascended into glory are revealed—the stages of its consummation all recorded. They are deeply interesting to us, they are divinely associated with our own resurrection and ascension to glory. The glorifying of the Son of man and his assumption into the glory he had with the Father before the world was, began with his resurrection. Till then it was veiled ; we saw “no form nor comeliness” in him ; he was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” until he died upon the cross ; but at his resurrection all was changed. In Rom. i. 4 we read, “he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” And Acts xiii. 32, 33, which we compare with this, records that “the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again ; as also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.” Taken up out of death, the curse, the grave, exalted out of humiliation into the essential glory of the only begotten Son ; his resurrection and ascension deeply associated are his people’s salvation, happiness and security with that resurrection. On that occasion it was that our great High Priest entered on his heavenly office, as it is written : “Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest ; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.” (Heb. v. 5.) Manifested Sonship is associated with his resurrection, so also is his Priesthood, and so also is *our* salvation ; and all three rest upon the same blessed foundation : the relationship of the only begotten Son to

ther. This is strong ground for faith and hope to
t on.

Acts ii. 33, records a further benefit to us in con-
xion with the exaltation of our risen Head. His first
t when as consecrated High Priest he ascended up on
gh, was to send to us the Holy Ghost ; and we read,
Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and
iving received of the Father the promise of the Holy
ost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and
ar." The descent of the Holy Ghost the Comforter
the day of Pentecost was the priestly blessing of our
rified mediator.

But he is *enthroned King* as well as Priest, and his por-
n and his inheritance are in his people. In Ephesians
18-23, the Apostle prays "The eyes of your under-
ding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is
hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of
inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding
eatness of his power to us-ward who believe, accord-
to his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ,
en he raised him from the dead, and set him at his
n right hand in the heavenly places, far above all
ncipality, and power, and might, and dominion, and
ery name that is named, not only in this world, but
o in that which is to come : and hath put all things
der his feet, and gave him to be the head over all
ngs to the church, which is his body, the fulness of
n that filleth all in all." Hence we can understand
at lay in the heart of Christ, when he said—"O Father,
rify thou me with thine own self with the glory which
ad with thee before the world was."

Yet, again, see other consequences of his being glorified. In Ephesians iv. 8, "When he ascended up high, he led *captivity captive*, and gave *gifts unto men*." Now that he ascended, what is it but that he ascended first into the lower parts of the earth? that descended is the same also that ascended up above all heavens, that he might fill all things,"— heaven with his glory, fill earth with his praise, fill hearts of his people with the Holy Spirit, and fill universe with his name; these are some of the steps which he went up into "the glory that he had with Father before the world was."

Moreover, we gather from the Apostle Peter a further motive in connexion with the glorifying of our blessed Christ; "God raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; *that your faith and hope might be in God.*" (I Peter i. 21.) These are some of the ends which he went up into the glory, and a portion of gifts bestowed on us as he ascended, for all these things and more than these, were in our great Redeemer's heart when he said—"Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Lastly. You remember that, in I Cor. xv. Christ's resurrection into glory is said to be as "*the first fruit* of them that slept," *i.e.*, the pledge, the sample, earnest, and the consecration of the harvest to follow. And in Col. iii. 3, his whole salvation is thus expressed: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." In I Timot

16, we have an epitome of all this: "without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I do not think this text usually interpreted according to the mind of the Spirit. Observe the order of events here, "God was manifest in the flesh;" we know that means the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Justified in the Spirit;" here I believe the resurrection is spoken of; (we know the agent was the Holy Spirit) "he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4); and again in the same epistle, (iv. 25,) we are taught he was raised again because of our justification. Next follows in order his ascension into heaven—"Seen of angels." Then "Preached unto the Gentiles;" Then (for faith cometh by hearing), "Believed on in the world." But not until all his redeemed are gathered, raised from the dead, baptized into one body, and received up into glory will the mystery of godliness be fulfilled; and Christ be mystical. "Received up into glory," this shall be the *consummation* here revealed; to interpret this last clause of the verse, as fulfilled in the ascension of Christ himself, is evidently to overlook and then invert the divine order. In that case, the verse would read thus: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, *received up into glory*, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world!

Thus we have tried to follow some of the wonderful purposes of love and blessing toward us in the heart of

Christ, when he said, "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And as he ascended to the throne, and took possession of all power in heaven and earth and sent down his Spirit, so by-and-by he "will come again and receive us unto himself, that where he is, there we may be also." All these benefits which were secured to his people, and which were all involved in his being glorified, were present to our Redeemer's mind!

But, high above all communicable majesty, our blessed Head has ascended into the glory which he had with his Father before the world was, and of which he himself implies that the utmost he can ask for his people is that they may *behold it*: "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." Nay, it would seem as if the glory that he can communicate to us was but the qualification for our beholding *that* glory; for he said "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may behold my glory." So it is, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are to inherit the fruits of his mediatorial glory, and to behold his personal glory without a veil between. Oh, what unction from the incommunicable glory, what fulness of light and joy, a peace, and blessing shall descend upon the heads, a hearts, and souls, of his blood-bought ones throughout never-ending eternity! If the anointing oil, descending upon the head of Aaron, went down to the skirts of his raiment, what shall the reality be, when, by-and-by, the descending glory from our Head God-man, enshrined

ential deity, shall come down upon the members to them for evermore ! If, even now, “we with unveiled eyes, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. iii. 18), what shall it be when we are with Him where he is, and see him face to face? All this and more, oh ! how much more, was in the heart of our loving, *loving* Saviour, when he said, “Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own glory with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

§

have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.”—JOHN xvii. 6.

THIS is the second part of our Lord’s prayer. Hitherto he had prayed for himself in the character and with the views and objects we have already considered, and on this ground, “I have glorified thee on the earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” Now he prays for his eleven disciples ; he prays for them as representing those for whom his work was finished, and the manifestation of his Father’s name intended.

Before entering more particularly on the subject of the text, I desire to make a few general remarks. The Lord prays not only for his disciples—doubtless they had a special place in his mind, they were his first fruits—

but he prays for all his people to the end of time, as "men given unto him out of the world." It was not eleven disciples only who were given to the Lord Jesus Christ; surely it was not of them only he spake when he said, "Let not your heart be troubled;" not to them only he promised, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also;" not merely to encourage them that he said, "In the world shall ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." You remember that remarkable passage in Heb. xiii. 5, 6, where we have a key as to the divine mind in reference to the universal application of particular promises to individual believers; "Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that *we* may boldly say, The Lord is *my* helper." Here the Apostle quotes a promise made to Joshua, and applies the comfort of it to the believers in his own day, laying down a general rule for a similar appropriation of all the promises of God by all his people, at all times.

Again; when the Lord spake to his Father, saying, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world," how much still remained to be manifested of that name! He had declared, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" he had said, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," but this was not yet done. Just as he had said before, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," so he says here, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world"

the truth is, all power was vested in him for this purpose, and the Holy Ghost was awaiting his ascension to heaven, to descend to be the revealer, through Christ, of that Father; and here he speaks of it as, in every sense of the word, *a finished work*; whether he speaks of his own work, "I have finished the work;" whether he speaks of the revelation of the Father's name to them, "I have manifested thy name;" or whether he speaks of their reception of that name, "they have kept my word," the whole is a beautiful illustration of our blessed Lord's intercession at the right hand of God. Not a word *against* his people, no reference to their failings, their shortcomings; no allusion to what they had done, none to what they were about to do as a body "all forsook him and fled;" no, he speaks only of them as they were in the Father's purpose, as in association with himself, and as the recipients of the fulness he came down from heaven to bestow upon them: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." Very blessed it is to dwell upon Christ's prayer in this point of view, as giving us an illustration of the mode and character of his intercession for us now at the right hand of God.

Let us, now, endeavour to strengthen faith by directing our attention to the arguments by which he presses his petitions, and also the petitions themselves. There are seven considerations urged and seven petitions presented.

1. The first is: "I have manifested unto them thy name." This fact is repeated in the last verse, "I have declared unto them thy name." Thus he enshrines them,

as it were, in the name of his Father, baptizing them into all that name involves.

2. He pleads the Father's *own interest in them*. seems to exalt this consideration even above his work for them; "Thine they were." Let us learn to prize the fact that we belong to God, beyond all other facts whatever, for it is because we belong to God that we have been given to Christ.

3. He pleads the gift of them to himself; "thou gavest them to me." The Father's interest in them first, and then, as the result, his gift of them to Christ.

4. He pleads their reception of himself and his message; "they have kept thy word." The word of God proclaiming to them the gospel of his grace; the word, says Christ, "they have kept." We know how feebly they kept it, and even while he uttered those words how misty their notions were, how weak their faith, how little after all they understood. Even when he had risen again, we are told, "as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." His crucifixion seemed to have extinguished their hope; "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." But in the strong majesty of his own grace to them, in the fulness and security of his own purposes towards them, he pleads, "they have kept thy word." Oh, well for us that we have such an Advocate!

5. Then, see verse 10, for another wonderful plea, the power of which he presents them to the Father, the blessings he is about to ask, "I am glorified in them." He had prayed, "Father, glorify thy Son," and

he plainly says, Father, if thou wilt glorify me, remember I am glorified *in them*. Oh, to hear him say for our own poor selves! and if faith's ears were open we should hear this very petition, even now ascending to the Father, in heaven, on our own behalf.

5. In verse 14 there is another plea—and it falls like lightning upon the soul to read it: Father, “the world hath hated them;” thus he would challenge not only the Father's love, but his sympathy for his people. The world hates them: just *as it hated me* it hates them: they are cast upon thee, Father, they are far from home in an ungenial wilderness. Father, they are in the world, where temptations, difficulties, trials, diseases, and anguish will follow them, where they are persecuted for my name's sake; let this fact fix thine attention upon them, secure thy care for them, and cause me to put thine everlasting arms round about them.

7. Again, verse 14, “they are not of the world, even I am not of the world,” redeemed, delivered, I have evermore associated them with myself; and now, Father, hear me while I ask thee what I desire thou shouldst do for them.

Seven special petitions follow:—

I. “Keep them,”—verse 11, “Holy Father, *keep* them through thine own name those whom thou hast given me;” let thy name, which I have manifested unto the world, be their hiding place, their tower, their refuge, and their rest; thou seest their need, Father, thou knowest their own interest in them, and they are thy gift to me; therefore, keep them! Thus he deposits his people into the Father's heart, and commits them to his care.

2. Verse 17. "Sanctify them."

3. Verse 21. Unite them. How he longed to his people separated from evil, and united, bound to another by the cords of his own divine love! "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

4. Verse 24. Let them be "with me where I am"

5. Glorify them, by granting them to "behold glory which thou hast given me."

6. Verse 26. (Who can measure this prayer?) "the love wherewith thou hast loved me . . . be in them."

7. Lastly. And "*I myself in them.*"

Now, what more could God give? what more could Christ ask? what more could his blood purchase? what more could his spirit reveal, or enable his people enjoy, than is here pleaded out before God, at that moment when Christ's hour was come, and he was pouring his last words into that Father's heart whose work he had finished, whose name he had glorified and whose glorified name he had manifested to the redeemed ones?

Let us now examine the text itself, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me, out of the world."

By the name of God is signified *God himself*, his perfections, attributes, character, God's revealed name. In the word of God, we have Jehovah manifesting himself to his people by various names, a precious study it would be to collect them! Let me remind you of a few: "The high and lofty one that inhabiteth etern"

name is Holy" (Isa. lvii. 15): "The Creator of
 ends of the earth" (Isa. xl. 28); "The God of
 " (Acts vii. 2); "The holy one of Israel" (Isa.
 14); "Thy God that pleadeth the cause of his
 " (Isa. li. 22); "The Lord thy God which teach-
 thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that
 shouldest go" (Isa. xlviii. 17); "The God of hope"
 i. xv. 13); "The God of peace" (Heb. xiii. 20);
 his new best name, *Love!* "God is love" (1 John

ow the manifestation of *the name* of God is that
 a constitutes the glory of God; because by this
 he himself is made known. Just as light consti-
 the glory of the sun, because it shews us what it is,
 e name of God reveals God, and in his revealed
 we learn what he is. Thus the manifestation of
 ame is his glory. Now God has manifested him-
 in creation; "The heavens declare the glory of
 and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."
 has manifested himself in providence, upholding,
 ding, protecting the universe. The Psalmist says,
 eyes of all wait upon thee, thou givest them their
 in due season." And God has revealed himself
 ace, telling us his purposes, spreading out before us
 res of those purposes in types and shadows,
 ng to us promises, giving us direct communications
 e wondrous thoughts that he has to us-ward in
 ation with his own great name. Let us refer to a
 assages in the word. In Exod. iii. 13-15, when
 nds Moses to deliver his people Israel out of the
 age of Pharaoh: "Moses said unto God, Behold

when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall speak unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you: and they shall say to me, What is *his name*? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: *this is my name* for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." A God self-existing, all-sufficient, your God, here is a wonderful name; and who can comprehend the glory of it?

In Exod. vi. 3, he proceeds to reveal the meaning and open out to them the fulness of his name "Jehovah." Establishing his covenant (verse 5); hearing their groanings; bringing them out from under their burdens; ridding them from their bondage, and redeeming them (verse 6); taking them to himself for a people, pledging himself to be their God (verse 7); bringing them into the land he had promised to their fathers, giving it to them for a possession (verse 8). Here is the name!—*a glorious name*, and a wonderful manifestation of it even in this record! In ch. xxxiii. we have additional light thrown upon the name of God. In his considerable intercourse with God, Moses' heart burned with desire for a fuller manifestation of him, and he says, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." And God said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee."

ve, his *goodness*, his *name*, and his *glory* are all the
 . This is the name of which he is speaking in the
 In ch. xxxiv. 5-7, we have the Lord proclaiming
 ame. The Old Testament *proclaims* it, Christ *mani-*
 it ; that is the difference. " And the Lord descended
 e cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed
 ame of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before
 and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful
 gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness
 truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving in-
 y and transgression and sin, and that will by no
 is clear the guilty." " Just, and yet the justifier," here
 : Old Testament proclamation ; Christ is the New
 ament manifestation : " I have manifested thy name."
 nce again, see Num. vi. 24-27, where additional
 is thrown upon the name ; " The Lord bless thee,
 keep thee : the Lord make his face shine upon thee,
 be gracious unto thee ; the Lord lift up his counten-
 upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall
 ny name upon the children of Israel." Observe,
 the three-fold name of God, and its destination, its
 g-place pointed out ; " they shall put my name
the children of Israel."
 here is nothing Jehovah is so jealous of as his own
 name ; how that name has been ignored, how it has
 " polluted," how it has been misrepresented ; alas !
 how it has been blasphemed ! It was a glorious
 on for Christ to come and manifest that name, he
 ted it his highest glory ; as he teaches us here, that
 reatest glory he can bestow upon his people is to
 fest that name *to them*. Ignorance of God is our

ruin, knowledge of God is our salvation. "O right Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee;" (verse 25). He is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his Person, who so suited to manifest him? he is "the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father;" who so well qualified to make him known to the sons of men? But Christ is not only the manifestor of the Father's name, he is the *manifestation* of it; Christ, the manifestation of the *mighty power*, put forth for salvation; "Christ, the wisdom of God, and the power of God;" Christ, the *hidden wisdom*;" Christ, "the Word of God," "made of God, unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." He has manifested the *holiness* of God—a holiness so pure that he cannot be stained upon iniquity; he has manifested the *faithfulness* of God—a faithfulness so great that even the price which cost him his only begotten Son's life was never less fulfilled: Christ was the manifestation of the *fullness* of God—a fulness so vast that it can supply every need; and Christ was the manifestation of the *love* of God, for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." But he was not only the outward manifestation of the name of God, he arrested our reason, to convince our understandings, and also the inner power, whereby God manifests himself to the heart; for it is written, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, the face of"—in the person of—"Jesus Christ."

Lastly, we learn here that the greatest possible blessing which even Christ himself can bestow upon his people is to manifest the Father's name to them. He does it first : " I have manifested thy name." Evidently, in his estimation, this included everything else, because the rest flows from it. If God only manifests himself to you in Christ Jesus, every blessing that eternity can supply is sure to follow. This is the first mention he makes of his people in his prayer to his Father : " I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest out of the world." This was their life, " this is life eternal to know thee." This was the foundation of their confidence : " They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." Herein consisted their triumph and their glory : " Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee ;" " In the *name* of our God we will set up our standards." This was their protection : " The name of the Lord is a strong tower ; the righteous runneth into it and is safe." This was the ground of their fellowship with God : " In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." This was the security of their salvation, for as the depositories of the name of the Father, he pleads that the Father should keep them, sanctify them, and glorify them. And by-and-by, they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their heads ;" this is the description given of the glory to be revealed ! No wonder, then, he should dwell upon this, no wonder he should put it in the fore-front of his pleadings with his Father for his people, " I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gave me out of the world." You remember, in Old Testament times, the servants

of God were wont to inscribe the names of Jehovah the monumental pillars where the displays of his glory, his salvation, or of his kindly care had been manifested. When Abraham was taught the lesson of substitution at Mount Moriah, "Jehovah-jireh," the Lord will provide, (Gen. xxii. 14) was the name inscribed there; when the great victory was achieved over Amalek "Jehovah-nissi," the Lord my banner, (Exod. xvii. 15,) was inscribed there; when the "city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," is revealed, "Jehovah-shammah," the Lord is there, (Ezek. xlvi. 45,) was the title given to it; when the diseases of his people were healed, "Jehovah-Rophim," the Lord that healeth the sick, (Exod. xv. 26,) was the memorial written; when the justification of his people is celebrated, "Jehovah-Tsidkenu," the Lord our righteousness, (Jer. xxxiii. 16) is the inscription to celebrate this great fact; and when he spake peace, "Jehovah-shalom," the Lord send peace, (Judges vi. 24,) was the record of his grace.

But here are the true monuments, "*the men whom thou gavest me out of the world;*" and every name of God shall be inscribed upon them, and Jesus himself shall be the inscriber; for he has promised, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and I will write upon him the name of my God"—there is Jehovah-jireh—"and the name of the city of my God,"—there is Jehovah-shammah—"new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my name." (Rev. iii. 12.) And that new name is the fullest and highest manifestation God can give of himself.

; and if even now, "we all beholding, as in a
s, the glory of the Lord are changed into the same
ge from glory to glory," what will it be by-and-by,
n "he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and
ired in all them that believe," and when, with
eiled face, we behold his glory, and *see him as he*

Then we shall understand something of the depth
the meaning of our blessed mediator, when he
sents our names to his Father, saying, "I have
manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest
out of the world."

9

*have manifested thy name unto the men which thou
gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and
thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."*

—JOHN xvii. 6.

attempting an exposition of the first part of this
page, we dwelt particularly upon the manifestation
his Father's name by Christ. We were led to take
general view of the petitions which our Lord urges
his wondrous prayer for his people, and the grounds
which he presents them to his Father. And as
read the text again, with its context, we feel com-
ed to acknowledge it is impossible to conceive what
e could have been said in their behalf: "I have
manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest

me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." Wondrous Intercessor! Had they been the most faultless, perfect, constant, faithful, and loving of all the ministers of God that do his pleasure, instead of being, as we were, a company of poor, weak, failing, unworthy sinners, our blessed Lord could not have said this in their favour.

Hence we learn a most soul-sustaining truth. The word of God does not tell us one whit more of the privileges belonging to us as believers standing before Christ, than Christ takes credit for as he represents us before the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. If the Spirit of God tells us in his word, "Ye are complete in him," our Intercessor speaks of us *as* complete in him. If the Spirit of God in his word proclaims to us that "by him all that believe are justified from all things," our glorious Intercessor speaks of us *before his Father* as "justified from all things." And if the Spirit of God tells us in his word that none can accuse us, and that no one can condemn us, so doth the heavenly Intercessor speak of us before his Father's throne, as those whom no man can accuse and whom no man can condemn.

How it must have amazed his disciples to hear such words! what *a world of grace* they must have opened out to their understandings! The Lord admits *them*, and, in admitting them, admits *us* to the very secret of his Father's heart. He opens out to us all the hidden purposes of the everlasting covenant, and points out the subjects and objects which

braces. "Men"—not angels, not arch-angels—but men, poor sinners—"The men which thou gavest me;" the men—the specially chosen, the specially loved amongst the sons of men. From *whence* were they taken? "Out of the world." Oh! it was not that they were better than others; they were "of the world," they were "in the world," they "followed the course of this world," they had been like the world, carried captive at his will by "the Prince of this world," blinded as to their understanding by the world and its glittering nothingness, guilty, "children of wrath even as others," condemned, enemies of God, no love for him, no desire towards him, no knowledge of him, but loved with an intensity that only God can be conscious of, and given to the Lord Jesus Christ to be redeemed in him with an everlasting salvation. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me."

We have already remarked how constantly our blessed Lord dwells upon the fact that the men were given to him. Seven times in this prayer he reminds the Father that he had given his people to him. Evidently Christ regarded this gift as the greatest proof of his Father's love *to him*, even as the Holy Ghost teaches the believer to regard the gift of Christ as the greatest proof of our heavenly Father's love *to us*. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Herein is our love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." If, if we compare the passages in the New Testament,

where Christ speaks of his people as the Father's to him, and of his delight in them as his portion, joy, and crown; if we compare I say, these passages with those which speak of the gift of Christ as pledge of the Father's love *to us*, and as being portion and joy, our glory, and our crown, we know not on which side the grace seems to preponderate, and whether the Holy Ghost would teach us more to admire the grace which gave us to Christ or give Christ to us.

“Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.” Christ here traces all the Father's acts and purposes toward his people, whether in creating them, protecting them, bestowing his grace upon them now, or by-and-by crowning them with glory, to the high source and divine foundation of all grace, “thine they were.” This is the origin of all grace, the Father's own interest and property in his people, the Father's own unspeakable and everlasting love. Oh what a blessed resting-place for faith is here! Yes, God *has*, he ever *had* and ever *will have*, an inheritance of glory in his people; he formed them for himself. The world, the flesh, and the devil have sought to rob God of his glory, mar the inheritance in his people, and eclipse the majesty of his name: “And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no Intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness it sustained him;” he “laid help on one that was mighty;” and he gave his people over into the hands of Christ—the most fitted, the most able, the most precious one to him—and wherefore? That he might rede

from all iniquity, that he might regenerate them in the divine nature, that he might restore them to the position they had lost, and much *more* than this, that he might raise them to a position which they never had—even into union and communion with the very begotten Son of God. “Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.” Christ’s people, being his Father’s property, are not entrusted with the happiness and fulness intended for them, but are given over to Christ to be preserved and qualified for all the Father’s care which he has provided for them.

In reading these words, I confess that to me it seems hard to discover whether Christ most prizes his people, as his Father’s property, his love-gift to himself, or as his own beloved ones; evidently *all these* considerations are in his heart while he pleads for them. “Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.” Truly, it is divine and irresistible pleading, written for our sakes, that our hearts may be feasted, and our hope established, that we may love the Lord our God, and go on our way rejoicing.

Here then, we may trace our divine lineage, if we be the people of God; “*Thine they were.*” God’s own property, and because God’s own, *given* to Christ: and because given to Christ, *saved*. Observe, it was no part of the work of Christ to make us God’s, and it was no part of the work of Christ to secure God’s love for us. Hear his own testimony: “Thine they were,” Father, and thou gavest them me.” How clearly and beautifully the Spirit opens out this subject in Eph. i. The apostle is addressing the saints, the separated ones.

God's people ; observe the position in which he dresses them, (verse 1) "*in Christ Jesus ;*" there they are the given ones, they are in Christ Jesus, and, being in him, see what follows: (verse 3) "*bles* with all spiritual blessings:" (verse 4) "according he hath *chosen* us in him;" (verse 6) "he hath made *accepted* in the beloved;" (verse 7) "in whom we have *redemption* through his blood, the *forgiveness* of sins (verse 11) "in whom also we have obtained an *inheritance ;*" (verse 13) "in whom also after that believed ye were *sealed* with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession;" and then (verses 17, 18) the Apostle presents this prayer—it is what he desires, it is certainly all our souls need: "That the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, might give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." In 1 Cor. iii. 21, we have the very same teaching. Why is it that we have an inheritance? why are all things ours? "All things are yours: the world, life, death, Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and all things present, or things to come: all are yours." We might say, perhaps, because Christ is ours; not so! because "*ye are Christ's,*" a very much higher reason. Christ's interest in his people is their security even more than their interest in Christ; his love for me is my security, his property in me, much more than my property in him which is but the consequence; and

is a still higher reason, "*Christ is God's.*" Here we are taken up to the thought in our Lord's mind in context, *the origin* of all grace, which is not our interest, but God's interest in us. "Thine they were, thou gavest them me." All things are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's; such is the pleading of our blessed Lord, while he prayed for "the men whom the Father had given him out of the world." But why, being taken out of the world, were they given to Christ! Because Christ is the Head of the Church, the Head of grace, and the Head of glory. There could have been one higher than Christ, God could have given them to him; but Christ is "Head of all things to his Church;" and as they are to be created, they are given to the Head thereof; as God's purpose is to crown them with all grace, they are given to the Head of grace! and, as God's purpose is to glorify his people, he has given them to Christ, who is the Head of glory! Now, all things were created for Christ; the *greatest thing* created for him is his Church. The worlds were created for him; there would be no world but that the Lord purposed Christ should have a kingdom. The heavens were created for Christ; there would be no heaven, or heaven of heavens, but that Jehovah purposed that his Son should have a kingdom, but "*the Bride*" is more than the kingdom, more precious to him than earth and heaven. Angels were created for Christ; no angel would ever have winged his way through infinite space but that it was Jehovah's purpose that his Son should have attendants; but the Son is more than the attendants. Whatever be the

thrones our blessed Christ is to occupy, whatever be dominions he is to possess, whatever be the principalities over which he is to rule, he will give to his bride "to sit with him on his throne, even as he himself overcame and is set down with his Father on his throne." Christ was set up as Lord of the universe ; but his people are "the members of his body"—his own flesh and blood, and "no man ever yet hated his own flesh ; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church." All other creations are from without ; the church, in some mysterious ineffable way, is from *within*. This is pictured to us in the garden of Eden, when Adam, the great type of Christ, was created, and dominion was given him over all creatures, and he gave them names ; but there was no "companion meet for Adam among them all." And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and while he slept, God took part of himself and formed it into a woman, and presented her to the man. "This," said Adam, "is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." And the Apostle (Eph. v.) tells us: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery : but it speaks concerning Christ and the church." Christ is the image and glory of God ; his people are to be the image and the glory of Christ ; Christ is the man of God's right hand, the people of Christ are his royal diadem.

Indeed, human language sinks burdened under the expressions of love—the love of Christ to his people. He calls them his jewels, his peculiar treasure, his flesh, his temple, his bride, his all ! The world may

ly upon the people of God, the world may speak
 ly of them, the world may think lightly of them, but
 what Jesus says of them. Oh, it is sweet to retire
 a cold world and listen! "Thine they were, and
 gavest them me." He is not speaking of the
ens given to him, of the *earth* given to him, of the
nes, and dominions, and principalities, and powers,
 crowns given to him, but "Thine *they* were, and
 gavest *them* me." Given to him to be his *charge*,—
 ot not he will take care of them; given in *trust*
 him, he will keep them, he will teach them, he will
 ify them, he will clothe them, he will wash them, he
 present them without spot or wrinkle, or any such
 g, to the everlasting praise of the glory of his grace.
 They are his "flock"—a scattered flock, but he will
 er them. Do you remember the beautiful passage
 zek. xxxiv., where we have the Lord's own definition
 e duty of a shepherd, and how he himself will fulfil
 (verses 11-16) "Thus said the Lord God, Behold, I,
 a I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.
 a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he
 among his sheep that are scattered; so will I *seek* out
 sheep, and will *deliver* them out of all places where
 have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.
 I will *bring* them out from the people, and *gather*
 a from the countries, and will bring them to their
 land, and *feed* them upon the mountains of Israel
 the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the
 ntry. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon
 high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there
 l they *lie* in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall

they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed flock, and I will cause them *to lie down*, saith the I God. I will *seek* that which was lost, and *bring a* that which was driven away, and will *bind up* which was broken, and will *strengthen* that which sick." Ah! he is the good Shepherd; he will take of the flock committed to his charge.

They are his "bride." Will he not delight in th
 "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so s
 thy God rejoice over thee." They are his "*child*
 "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the I
 pitieth them that fear him." The mountains
 depart, and the hills be removed; but his kindness s
 not depart from them, neither shall his faithfulness
 They are his "*poor and needy*." What have they
 himself? Not in all the wide world has the soul of
 child of God a single resting-place but in the love of
 Lord and Saviour; not a hiding-place but his he
 not a portion but himself. He knows it. They
 "*his weary ones*." The journey has been long, and
 path rough; and weary eyes are looking to him;
 weary hands are stretched out to him; and w
 hearts are longing for him; and he knows it. T
 are his "*war-worn*" ones. The battle has been
 constant, and often gone hardly with them, but he
 pledged himself to make them more than conqu
 and he will. They are his "*temple*," and he will inh
 them; they are his "*inheritance*," and he will pro
 and possess them; and he hath made them his "pr
 and kings" to shew forth "the praises of him who l
 called them out of darkness into his marvellous lig

thine they were, thine they are, and thine they shall be, and thou gavest them me.

There is rest for the weary in truth like this, and our hearts enter into it by faith for *his* name's who uttered this prayer for our comfort and uragement.

10

“*They have kept thy word.*”—JOHN xvii. 6.

I have already remarked that this verse is the commencement of the second part of our Lord's prayer. In the first five verses the petitions have reference exclusively to himself as the mediator; and having presented himself, he now presents his people to his only Father. He first of all speaks of them as the objects and subjects of divine love and of everlasting mercy; for he says, “I have manifested thy love unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me”—“I have saved in myself with an everlasting salvation; and they have kept thy word.” Our Lord's purpose is evidently to commend them to his Father in the best possible way, and he does it thus: “they have kept thy word.” (When shall *we* value that word as we ought to do?)

Here, then, is the highest commendation the mediator himself can give of his people to the Father, “Thine they were, and thou hast given them to me: and they have kept thy word;” we have, in this state-

ment, some wonderful characteristics of our precious Saviour's intercession.

He evidently considers himself responsible not only for the full discharge of the mission upon which the Father sent him, but also to give an account of its success, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world;" but *moreover* they have succeeded, "they have kept thy word." Surely here he gives them credit not only for what he had himself done in teaching them, but also for what the Holy Ghost was about to do in confirming the instructions he had given them; he not only pledges himself to the completion of his own work for them, but also to the completion of the work the Holy Ghost was about to accomplish in them, when he says, "they have kept thy word;" nor will he allow them to appear before God in anywise but as altogether acceptable and altogether accepted: for "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world;" "*and they have kept thy word.*"

Truly, faith in God's word is a wonderful and mighty principle, it is the most acceptable service the heart of man can render. Faith is that principle which lays hold upon God, through his word; it is the word of God in the soul; it is omnipotent power, because it lays hold upon the omnipotency of God himself; it overcomes the world; faith honours God and therefore God honours faith. And here we are taught something more, viz., that it is the first visible evidence of a relationship to God; "they have kept thy word." We cannot look into the book of Life and see whether

These are amongst those of whom the Lord says, "thine were, and thou gavest them me;" but we can look at the word of God, and if we can honestly say we have received that word, we do rest our souls upon the promises contained in that word, and upon him who gave that word it is, then we have the first and all-sufficient evidence of our relationship to God.

It is by the word so kept, as by *an instrument*, our conversion is effected and our souls renewed; it is by the word of God so kept we "grow up into him, in all things, which is the Head," old things pass away and all things become new; it is by the word so kept that Christ manifests to us his Father's name; and pledges to our souls the precious name which he so manifests to us. See John xiv. 22: "Judas saith unto him, not a traitor, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?" You observe the result, the Lord Jesus *is* manifested to his people and *is not* manifested to the world; his people have their peace, their hope in him; not so the world. How is this? "How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." It is in the keeping of the word of God that the Holy Spirit manifests the God of the word. The world doth not keep the word of God, therefore God is not manifested to them: *as* his people keep the word, to the same degree is the God of the word manifested to their souls.

Remark how the Lord commends those who his word. Writing to the church at Philadelphia church without a fault before God, it is said, "Thou hast a little strength, and hast *kept my word*, and not denied my name." (Rev. iii. 8.) "Because thou hast *kept the word of my patience*." (Verse 10.) Very a striking expression! The Lord oftentimes allows a long interval to elapse between giving the promise and the performance of it; and, in the meantime, is the exercise of patience, "the word of my patience." (1) How long the church had to wait for Christ, how long the church is waiting for Christ's coming again; oh! he is worth waiting for, "though he tarry long." He who has given the word will fulfil the promise. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." It is only as we keep the word that we are prepared for temptation. I tell you, friends, the time is coming when we shall need, yea, the time is come when we *do* need, to keep the word of God. What strange doctrines we hear of, what new notions, what new-fangled theories are everywhere circulating, and we have not the least security against being entangled and carried away by them, if we are not established in the word of God. And, alas! there are but few amongst us who are sufficiently acquainted with the word of God to be able to bring to the test of its standard the manifold heresies that are abroad. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The word of God

is crown. He has magnified his word above all
 name; crown you with it, brethren, hide it in your
 hearts, let it be as frontlets between your eyes, that
 you may not sin against God. Once again, see Luke xi.,
 the Lord commends the keeping of his word. We
 find in verse 27, "A certain woman of the company
 lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the
 womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast
 sucked." "But he said, Yea rather blessed are they
 that hear the word of God, *and keep it.*" And now he
 is speaking to his Father of his people: "They
 have kept thy word." Oh! thanks be to God that we
 have such an Intercessor!

"They have kept *thy* word." Observe the emphasis.
 The words spoken by Christ were the Father's words.
 He does not say, They have kept *my* words, but "They
 have kept *thy* word." He spake nothing of himself.
 He tells us—"My doctrine is not mine, but his that
 sent me."—John vii. 16. So of his works—his works
 were the Father's that sent him. "My Father worketh
 alway, and I work."—John v. 17. So of his mission
 he came as we read—John viii. 42, "Neither came I
 myself, but he sent me." And, seeing the words
 of Christ were the Father's words, and the mission of
 Christ was the Father's work, he tells us, "Verily,
 and truly, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and
 believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and
 shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from
 death unto life."—John v. 24.

"They have kept thy word." Surely, he pledges his
 word *for* them in saying this. There is nothing we

seem more to wonder at than the small amount of knowledge, and faith—aye, even of love, manifested by the disciples hitherto, and this notwithstanding many privileges they enjoyed, and the blessed teaching they had experienced. If there is any one thing we may wonder more at, it is the immense amount of knowledge our Lord Jesus Christ makes here, of the little knowledge and the little faith they had,—“They have kept thy word.” Surely if they had, without fault, or forgetfulness, or doubt, or failure, received all the words our Lord had spoken, kept every commandment our Lord had given, believed every promise our Lord had made, and treasured up, obeyed, and practised them—*alike* *them*—he could not have said more in their favour.

“They have kept thy word.” Note the blessed teaching here! very deep and very precious. Our Lord makes *no distinction* between disciple and disciple; some were much more bold than others; some were much more faithful than others; some walked much more closely with him than others. Doubtless it is so; but he makes no distinction, he speaks of them as one body; yes, and he speaks of the *whole church* as one body; “they have kept thy word.” We may notice here with profit and instruction the great difference between our standing in Christ, and our personal and actual experience. In the one case, God sees us only as he sees Christ; no spot, no stain, no possible accusation can be brought against us, no possible condemnation can be pronounced against us, we are “*complete* in him.” This is as much the case with one child of God as another; the least in the family, the feeble

ver in Christ Jesus is complete in him, and as
oted as was Paul, or as John, who lay upon his
n. "They have kept thy word," is Christ's account
em, speaking of them as standing in himself, and
epresented by him before God. But as to our
experience, and as to the disciples' experience, it
otherwise: believe me, they were very much like
we are ourselves. There is a habit now-a-days
eifying the disciples; it is a very great mistake;
were a company of poor, needy sinners such as
e, full of failures, and very faithfully the Scriptures
uth record their failures; their knowledge was
dim, their faith was oftentimes very feeble, their
s were very much mingled with what was earthly
sensual. And so it is with ourselves. Oh, how
ed our knowledge! *We* keep his word! Why,
of us, even the best taught of us, *know* very little
t it. What a scanty knowledge ours is of the
of God! How small our attainments in the
ledge, the enjoyment, and the fulness of that
. We learn, by daily experience, to confess it
and like the Apostle it behoves us to say, "For-
ng those things which are behind, and reaching
unto those things which are before, I press toward
mark for the prize of the high calling of God in
t Jesus," and like him, too, to pray as for others,
r ourselves, "that the eyes of our understanding
enlightened, we may know what is the hope of
alling, and what the riches of the glory of his
itance in the saints." Thus we should learn, by
ense of our own need, to watch, to pray, to strive,

to fight. But when Christ speaks of his disciples says, "They have kept thy word;" there is no mention of their forsaking him; yet he had just told them "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and leave me alone." His plea is, Father, "they have kept thy word." Precious, glorious, adorable Intercessor!

Having thus guarded the higher truth in this passage we must not overlook the fact that the little company around the Lord, for whom he prayed, *had* sincerely and truly received his testimony; they *did* truly follow him; with all their failures and shortcomings they could appeal to him, and he did not deny their appeal. Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that we have followed thee. They had left their little all—it was not riches but it *was* their all—to follow him, and his word was their law, himself their all, still they could not deny of themselves what he said for them, "they have kept thy word."

There is a very blessed emphasis upon "*thy word*." If the disciples did not fully know it, the Father himself knew it, and Christ knew it. It seems to me as if the Lord Jesus was calling his Father's attention to his *own* word. Oh what a treasury it was—of promise, grace, hope, blessing, and faithfulness! A deposit it was of everything the love of God could give or pledge himself to, or the faith of his people embrace, or their need require: now he says, Father, "they have kept *thy word*." "They little realized which that word means; they have but dimly apprehended all which that word pledges thee to; but

what that word pledges thee to, and thou knowest, I have manifested thy name unto them, and "they kept *thy word*." "Lord, remember thy word unto servant, upon which thou hast caused *me* to hope," teach me to keep *that word*.

We further gather from these words how greatly Christ desires that his people should keep his Father's word; for, while he utters this high commendation of them, "they have kept thy word," surely he looks at us and teaches us how closely it lies upon his very love, that we should keep that word; and why? Because he loves us, and he delights in the evidences of our love. "If a man love me, he will keep my words." (John xiv. 23.) Now, the loving heart of the Lord Jesus looks for responsive love, and it is thus his people express and manifest their love; they keep his words. But there is something more; he wants our society, and it is in our keeping his word he enjoys our society, for we read (John xiv. 23), "If a man love me he will keep *my words*: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." And yet more, the Lord is longing for his people's joy as well as for their society. "These things which I *spoken* unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (Chap. xv.); therefore, would he have us keep his word. Again, he longs that we may possess his *peace* in our souls. "These things I have *spoken* unto you, that in me ye might have peace." (Chap. xvi. 33.) He longs, too, that we should be comforted: he sends the Holy Ghost Comforter to teach us all these things, to bring all

these things to our remembrance. He longs for people's security; and what is our security? *his word* is the foundation of our faith, and our hope, the mirror for our love, the lamp for our path, the light for our feet, our refuge in danger, our food in the wilderness, and our sword for the battle. He longs for his people to enjoy realized union with himself; and it is in the *keeping of his word* we enjoy this realized union. "If ye abide in me, and *my words* abide in you." (Chap. xv. 7.) Here lies the power: we abide in him as he abides in us, and we realize our union with him and abide in him only as his *words* abide in us. Finally he longs to see his people's desires granted, and there should be no unanswered prayers, no unsatisfied petitions: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall *ask what ye will*, and it shall be done for you." (Chap. xv. 7.)

If this be so, how ought we to unite with our Father in heart, and say to our God: "Oh! let thy word be expressed on our souls, expressed in our lives, confessed by our faith, and professed by our conversation. Bless thee, Father, that thou hast given us thy name, that thy Son might manifest it. We bless thy Son of God, that thou didst come down from heaven to manifest to us our Father's name; we bless thy Holy Ghost, that thou hast taken away the veil, and shewn us that name. Our God, thou hast said: 'My word shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in all thing whereto I sent it.' Oh! may we keep thy word. It is all we need here below. If we keep that

shall find that word can keep us, comfort us, enlighten us, strengthen us, establish us. But when conscience accuses us we have but kept it feebly, when we accuse ourselves of forgetfulness, ignorance, unbelief, may our souls ascend to him who has gone *within the veil*, and whose own blood has sprinkled the mercy-seat, and that our unbelief may be pardoned; and let us come to him while he says for us and of us—"They have kept thy word." Even now, Lord Jesus! say of thine own name, say *in us*, by thine own Holy Spirit—"They have kept thy word."

11

For they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.—JOHN xvii. 7.

In this part of his prayer, our blessed Lord is wholly engaged in commending his people to his Father. No mention of the slightest kind is made to any of their many deficiencies, no reference to any of their frequent sins; we search in vain throughout the whole prayer for anything like an accusation against them, directly or indirectly. This is a beautiful comment on what the Apostle afterwards urges, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died!" In the fulness of his mediatorial office, in the virtue of his atoning blood, at the hour was come,—in the greatness of his sacrifice, in the height, and depth, and length, and

breadth of the love that passeth knowledge, in which he had received them at his Father's hands, and manifested to them that Father's name; enshrining that name he now presents them to his Father, accreted with all his own work of salvation for them, and all the covenant work the Holy Ghost was about to perform in them. All judgment, the Scripture says, is given unto the Son; the Father judgeth no man; thus he, to whom all judgment is committed, speaks to them: "they have kept thy word; and, now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee." How little they actually knew at that time! how imperfectly they had kept that word! how deficient had been their faith! This is evident from the Lord's own frequent rebuking of them; only a short time before, we find him saying to them, "Do ye believe?" and how often, do we find such rebuke directed to these, "O ye of little faith;" and again, "where is thy faith?" "How is it that ye do not believe?" Let us evermore remember this most precious fact, that whenever in his wondrous grace our blessed Teacher discovers to ourselves our deficiencies, however he may correct and rebuke us, discovering to us in our own experience how needy, how feeble we are, and of how little faith, yet our standing before God is in the fullness of our head and representative, and he will never allow us to appear before his Father otherwise than as enshrined with all the completeness of his own righteousness. When we know, even as we are known,—through our own experience shall be more blessed,—yet shall not our standing or acceptance be more complete than

while he pleads for us and of us, "Now they have seen that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee."

What a remarkable illustration we have in these words of the fact that the whole of his life on earth, all his acts, and all his doctrines, bore witness that he sought not his own glory but the glory of him that sent him.

This is of the utmost importance, and it most deeply influences our worship of God, and our estimation of our Heavenly Father's love, that we should have right views of that which the Lord here takes such pains to teach. It is impossible to think and speak of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to disparage the Father's love. It appears to me one of the simplest proofs in Scripture, of the Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, if he is not identified with his Father in salvation, then has God set up a rival to himself in our world and in our hearts, by sending the Lord Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.

I will illustrate what I mean by a story told in ancient history.

Cyrus had conquered and taken captive a prince and his wife and children; they were brought before him. Cyrus, who could sometimes manifest a very generous disposition, demanded of the prince, "What will you give me if I set you at liberty?" "I will give you my kingdom," was the reply. "And what ransom will you then give for your wife and children?" Quickly the answer came, "I will give *my life* for them." "Well," said Cyrus, "I will restore your kingdom, your

wife, and your children, you may have all ;” he pleased with the devoted love expressed by the wife and the husband. Of course the prince was very grateful and fell at the feet of Cyrus, and expressed thanks, and his admiration of the generosity of the prince and the royalty of the gift. But one was silent—the wife said nothing—and her husband anxiously rebuked her, and said, “Why do you not thank the prince?” She answered, “I am thinking only of the man who said he would give his life for my liberty. All thought of Cyrus’ generosity was obliterated in my heart ; she was thinking only of a love that would substitute his own life for hers.

Now this is something like the case before us. Is the Lord Jesus Christ’s person, mission, and salvation to be not all ascribed to our Father’s love, as the Father himself did so faithfully and diligently teach his disciples what would the effect be? That God would be the object of awe and fear, while Christ would have our love, all our sympathy, and all our gratitude. The teaching of our blessed Master was evermore ; things, Father, *are of thee.*” And he would lead us to see in himself, and in his work, but the manifestation of the Father’s love, and the Father’s grace ; and thus the Holy Spirit teaches us in Scripture, “Scarcely for a righteous man will one die ; but *God commendeth his love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*”

Examine a few passages on this subject. See John vi. 38, 39 ; “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but *the will of him that sent me, and*

Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise again at the last day." See also chap. xv. 15: "things that *I have heard of my Father* I have made known unto you," where he evidently would have us refer to the Father all the comfort, peace, and blessing his words produced, or were calculated to produce. See also that remarkable passage in chap. x. 18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again; no man can take it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *What commandment have I received of my Father.*" You will attribute to the Father all his own atoning work, and tells us it was an act of obedience on his part to the Father's will. As the Lord taught, so did his disciples. (I dwell on this because it is so very important.) John v. 18. "All things *are of God*, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." And Heb. ii. 10: "He became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, *in bringing many sons unto glory*, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." This is fully comprehended in our text: and thus he taught his disciples; "Now have they known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me *are of thee.*" Let us endeavour, God helping us, to grasp this great object.

1. The speaker. He had been in the form of God. He was not so now; he was in the form of a servant—he was Jehovah's servant, his obedient, submissive, dependent, servant, emptied of all the glory that was

his own, and which he had with his Father, before world was. He was here "in the likeness of flesh," "doing his Father's will," occupied with Father's business." The man of God's right hand, provided, qualified, appointed by the Father, to be salvation to the ends of the earth, a new and source of life, joy, peace, righteousness, grace, and to the church of God. All was *pure grace* to him pure grace *to us*; faithfully and diligently our bl Lord and Master taught us so. "A body hast thou prepared me," a people prepared, the salvation prepared mercy and truth prepared, and when he admits by-and-by into the kingdom, it shall be the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world and when into the glory, it shall be the glory that prepared. Christ, and Christ's salvation were but manifestations of the Father's name, the commendation of love of God; "he that hath seen me hath seen Father."

II. What are the things given to him? "They are known that *all things* whatsoever thou hast given me of thee." He had spoken (in verse 2) of *all persons* given to him: "As thou hast given him power over all things that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Now he speaks of *all things given to him*. The persons were given that he might give eternal life to them; now all things are given to him that he may carry out this purpose, aim, and object, even to eternal life. I know not how many "alls" we read in Scripture as given to Christ; "all grace," "all mercy," "all might," "all dominion," "all long-suffering,"

er in heaven and earth" given into his hands, all
 ies of his people, whether they be thrones or
 nions, or principalities, or powers put under his
 "Head over *all things* to his church." "It pleased
 Father that in him should *all fulness* dwell." And
 i, "In him dwelleth *all the fulness of the Godhead*
 v." "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the
 ," and if so heaven and earth would be empty
 out him. Yet from Eph. i. 23, we learn that he
 d be empty without his people, for there we read,
 e church, which is his body, the fulness of him that
 a all in all."

III. Let us now endeavour to gather from Scripture,
 he will dispense his fulness. In John i. 16, we
 "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for
 ." So that the Lord Jesus will impart to his people
 he fulness which it hath pleased the Father should
 l in him for their supply. There are two or three
 ages connected with this subject well worth remem-
 g. Chapter xiii. 3, 4, "Jesus knowing that the
 er had given *all things into his hands*, and that he
 come from God, and went to God; he riseth from
 er, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel,
 girded himself . . . and *began to wash his disciples'*

Here he illustrates the use he intends to make of
 power and fulness vested in him, even condescending
 e most menial office, if necessary, for the supplying
 l the needs of all his blood-bought ones. In Matt.
 ii. 18, we have a similar connection. Jesus said to
 disciples, "*All power* is given unto me in heaven and
 arth, go ye *therefore*, and teach all nations." You

observe the connection between his possessing all fullness and all power, and the proclamation of free grace and everlasting salvation to poor sinners.

Again, in 1 Cor. iii. 21, a very wonderful statement is made. "*All things* are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: all things are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Nothing more can be said of *him* than that all things are his, and no less is said of us in him than that "*all things are yours*." And why? for "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God." He is the root and source of all. Again, in that wonderful vision the Evangelist had of our Priest and King in heaven (Rev. i. 17, 18): "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead, and he laid his right hand upon my head, saying unto me, (all things are given into those hands,) saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. See then how he will exert the power given to him, how he will dispense the fulness entrusted to him, in protecting, in blessing, sustaining, comforting, and keeping his people.

Once again, (Psalm lxxviii. 18, compared with Eph. iv. 8:) "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them." Now, in quoting this passage Eph. iv. 8, the Apostle says: "Wherefore he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The Psalmist said:

ved gifts." The Holy Ghost has since then come from heaven to tell us what he intended to do with the gifts he had received—even to *give* them. And he comments on the passage: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might *fill all things*." This is our glorious Lord's present work; thus it is he is engaged and employed in reference to the fulness it pleased the Father should dwell in him; thus he exercises the power of *power*—in heaven and in earth, which it pleased the Father should be vested in him. *Filling all things:* filling heaven with the glory of his eternal name, filling earth with the praise of his great salvation, filling the hearts of his people with himself: and, by-and-by, he will fill their bodies, too, with glory; he will be admired of his saints; they shall reflect the beauty and glory of him who bought them with his blood, who represented them on the cross, and now represents them in heaven, sending down the Holy Ghost to inhabit them, "that they might be *filled with all the fulness of God*." (Eph. 3.) And "all things, Father, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee." The glorious person of the mediator, his office, and salvation; his fulness, glory, and majesty—all of thee! and "His glory is great in thy vision." Thus the mediator prays.

His name shall endure for ever. His name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." Now and forever more he is the Christ—"the same yesterday, and today, and for ever;" full of grace, full of power, full of pardoning love. His mediatorial throne shall con-

tinue till God be all in all. He who sits there ready to receive all who come to him. He is unchangeable in his love, unceasing in his compassion, and endless in his grace and truth; rich in mercy to all that call on him. "Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Christ is King of grace, and therefore, can dispense it; he is head of creation and therefore can control it; he is first-born from the Father, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. "On his head are many crowns;" but highest, and richest, and fairest of all—the crown of his people's salvation. "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of his gladness of his heart."

"Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee." For "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." "He is love, not that we loved God, but that *he loved us*, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "*We have known these things.*" There is a very beautiful comment on this, shewing how the Holy Ghost subsequently establish the disciples in this great truth (see I John iv. 16): "We have known and believed that love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." Thus we stand, henceforth before God in Christ. However he may rebuke

such us our failings and infirmities, our standing is more in himself, we are accepted in the beloved, this is God's appointment.

Lastly, as we remarked before, that Christ while sitting with his Father, "They have kept thy word," acts at the same time to speak to our hearts and tell how much it is for his glory and our own happiness, we should keep his word ; so here in our text, while we listen by faith as he addresses the Father for us, as they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee," let us remember how pleasing it must be to him, and to that Father before whom he sits, that we should assure our hearts that the work of redemption, the person of Christ, the salvation of Christ, the merits of Christ, the merit of his precious blood, and that shall ever flow from it now and throughout eternity, joy and peace, and happiness to our souls are all from God. All was from the Father's love, all was through the Father's wisdom, all was in the Father's command. "Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee."

When the Apostle John draws a distinction between children, young men, and fathers (1 John ii. 14), he puts a crown upon the head of the fathers, and thus he speaks of them : they "have known him *that is from the beginning.*" Beloved, as by the teaching of the Holy Spirit we apprehend these things, "the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, and we know what is the will of his calling." Thus God is glorified in us, and in him, and we are taught to say with the Apostle, though "there be gods many, and lords many, to us

there is but one God, the Father, *of whom are all things* and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom are all things*, and we by him," "to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

12

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have believed surely that I came out from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me."—JOHN xvii. 8

THERE are seven things given to Christ, as mediators of which he makes great account in this prayer.

First. A people given to him (verse 2).

Second. Eternal life to bestow upon that people (verse 2).

Third. Power over all flesh (verse 2).

Fourth. A work given him to do (verse 4). His work was, to die, "that through death he might deliver them that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14.) He was to finish the transgression, and bring in an everlasting righteousness; he was to save the church.

Fifth. The Father's name was given him that he might manifest that name to his people (verse 6), that they might be kept in that name (verse 12), and united to it (verse 21), and filled with the love of God (verse 26).

Sixth. "I have given unto them *the words which thou gavest me*" (verse 8).

seventh. "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them" (verse 22).

There, then, are *seven* gifts to Christ; praise be to them, they are given to *Christ*, given to One who can take of them, One who can dispose of them, One who can make no mistake about the use of them: The Father; The eternal life for the people; The power over all flesh; The work, the work of salvation; The Father's name, that they may be kept in that name, and filled with love divine in that name; The words, the means by which he manifests his name; and The glory to be yet revealed.

Now, observe, all these gifts are *for his people*, and given to them by him. This he confesses to his Father, acknowledging he had received them for that end, and in the hearing of his disciples, that they might have everlasting consolation, yea, that *we* too may have everlasting consolation; for these things are written that your joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Our text speaks of "The words which thou gavest me."

He evidently alludes to the testimony concerning himself now written for us in the Scriptures. How precious those words are, seeing the fourfold channel through which they have come down to us.

First, we have Jehovah, the Father, conceiving the plan of salvation, purposing, promising, and giving his Word; so conceived, purposed, and promised, to Christ to be executed.

Next, we have Christ, the Son, coming down from Heaven to fulfil his Father's words, and to convey them

to his people, and so he pleads, "I have given them words which thou gavest to me."

Next, we have a third channel; "he through the Holy Ghost gave commandments unto the Apostles." (Act. 13:25) When the Lord had fulfilled the words which the Father had given to him, he committed to the Holy Ghost the prerogative of communicating them to the Apostles. It was not till the Holy Ghost descended, on the day of Pentecost, they really apprehended "the words," yet the Lord takes credit, here, for having given them, and gives them credit for having received them; he may well do so; he had given them the words, and the Holy Ghost would come in due time to be the Remembrancer. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever the Father has said unto you." See all the three Persons of the Godhead engaged in giving these "*words.*" The Father giving them to the Son to execute; the Son executing them, and then giving them to the Holy Ghost to reveal, apply, and communicate.

Next, the Apostles! "They have received them, and they preached them during their lifetime, and then they wrote them; and the same Spirit that revealed the words to them must reveal them to us, and write them on our hearts, else we hear in vain, we read in vain, we listen in vain.

Here, then, you perceive four communications of the word—from the Father to Christ, from Christ *through the Holy Ghost* to the Apostles, and from the Apostles, as inspired by the Holy Ghost, to ourselves. How

image of Christ ought to make us value the Holy Scriptures ! how much he makes of them. "Thy word" "The words which thou gavest me." "The words which I have given unto them." The words which we have received, kept, understood, believed. Next to God himself there is nothing greater, nothing more precious than the word which reveals God ; the greater the Intelligence, whose wisdom, love, and truth, his words represent, the more precious the words are. A man's words go for nothing, a wise man's words are precious, but Christ is here speaking of the words of the all-Wise One, The all-True One, The all-Faithful One ; the words of him who is thus described—"God is light," and "God is love." "I have given unto them the words which *Thou* gavest me." They were words of wisdom, full of power ; they were words of salvation, lasting and free ; they were spirit, and they were life ; they comfort and they quicken all who receive them. By those words souls are begotten into the family of God, "of his own will begat he us with the truth ;" by those words souls are filled with joy, peace, and hope, and power, and holiness, and life ; all these things come into the soul in the hearing and in the believing of "The words which thou gavest me."

You observe the word "*for*" with which our text commences ; it places the words in a double connection, with what precedes and with what follows. "*For* I have given unto them the words," connects it with the words that precedes, "I have manifested unto them thy words." It was by *means* of the words he had been

enabled to manifest the Father's name. Then follow
 "They have *received* them, and have *known surely* that
 came out from thee, and they have *believed* that
 didst send me." It was through these words our
 was enabled to teach them to know these things. It
 through these words the Lord was enabled to ask
 them whence he came, and for what purpose. It
 through these words also faith was begotten in
 souls—that faith which united them to himself; for
 says, "They have believed that thou didst send
 Having thus taken a general view of the passage, let
 endeavour to gather the more direct instruction.

I. We learn here and from many similar passages
 both in the Old and New Testament that the gospel
 our salvation was originally a covenant of promise
with Christ, and given to him to carry out. Turn
 me to Isa. xlix. (Here is a message to ourselves in
 Testament times, *the dwellers in the isles*;) "Listen
 isles, unto me; and hearken ye people from far:
 Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bo-
 of my mother hath he made mention of my name,
 he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in
 shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me
 polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; and
 unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I
 be glorified." Then follows a complaint ("for who
 believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord
 revealed?") "He was in the world, and the world
 made by him; and the world knew him not; he came
 unto his own, and his own received him not"). "Then
 said, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength

thought, and in vain ; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." Such the faith which he is the example ! " And now, saith the Lord, I formed me from the womb to be his servant, to Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my strength shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the bones of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel ; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall stand and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the strength that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I answered thee : and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages : that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in darkness, Open your eyes. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall neither hunger nor thirst ; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them : for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them."

Now see Isa. i. 4-7 ; again Christ is the speaker : the Lord God *hath given me the tongue* of the learned, that I should know how to speak *a word in season* to

him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebel, neither turned away back. I gave my back to smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off my hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." "*The words which thou gavest me.*" You see all was arranged between Christ and his Father in the first instance. Turn to Isa. lix. 21: "As for me, this is *my covenant with them*, saith the Lord; my spirit that is upon thee (that is upon Christ), "and *my words which I have put in thy mouth* shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

Under the titles of David and Levi in the New Testament, the covenant was made with Christ. lxxxix. 19-22, "Then thou spakest in vision to the Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found *David my servant*; with my holy oil I have anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him." This is spoken of the *great David*. "The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And on to verse 37 is a continuous promise to Christ of triumph and dominion, "that his name shall endure for ever, and that the nations shall be blessed in him."

the strength of this promise he came ; these words in the joy set before him. "I have given unto *the words* which thou gavest me."

In 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, compared with Ps. cx., we have a further light. The marginal reading is, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, Be thou over men, ruling in the fear of God ; and as the light in the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds ; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house was not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure : for I have seen all my salvation, and all my desire, although he will not let it not to grow." He looked beyond himself and looked to the Messiah as the fulfilment thereof. In Mal. i. 1-4, where we have almost the same language, Mal. i. 1 alludes no doubt to the same communication ; "The Lord said unto my Lord, "Sit thou at my right hand, and I will make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord will send the rod of thy strength out of Zion : *rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.* Thy people shall be praising thee in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness *from the womb of the morning* : thou hast the strength of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Here, undoubtedly, the promise is to the true Melchizedek, and the covenant was made with him. These were the words given to Christ, and when he came to effectuate and to establish them, that all the conditions might be fulfilled.

Again, under the character of Levi, in Mal. ii. 4-6 :

“And ye shall know that I have sent this comment unto you that my covenant might be with saith the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with his life and peace; and I gave them to him, for the wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.”

“Now let us turn to the New Testament. In Gal. 3:16, you have the Apostle commenting upon an expression frequently met with in the Old Testament—*seed*.” “Now to Abraham and *his seed* were promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, and to many: but as of one, And to thy seed, *which is Christ*. You see the promise is made to Christ.

There is a remarkable passage in the opening of the book of Revelation—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto him*.” I suspect many of us read it in this way—“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, *which God gave unto us*.” No, all that is here opened out to us in prophecy, was first mapped out to Christ. God gave it *unto him*; he shewed him the white-robed multitude, and the city with the pearly gates; he shewed him the foundations thereof, and caused him to listen to the song of the redeemed; and gladly he came here to die that he might bring the things to pass. “The words which thou gavest me.” Yes, all was laid before him, the need of his people, and the high glory to which his sacrifice could raise them. “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,” and for the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, the love of Christ

trained him first, and, as we realize it, it will con-
 us now.

[. The second thing we learn, is that the words so
 to him he takes credit for having given to them
 God's commissioned Ambassador. See Deut. xviii.

]. "I will raise them up a Prophet from among
 brethren, like unto thee, and will put *my words in*
mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall
and him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever
 not hearken unto my word which he shall speak *in*
me, I will require it of him." "I have given unto
 the words which thou gavest me."

Let us compare two passages, John iii. 33-34, "He
 hath received his testimony" (that is Christ's) "hath
 his seal that God is true." And why? "For he
 a God hath sent, speaketh the words of God," "*The*
s which thou gavest me." Chapter vii, 16, "Jesus
 erred them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but
 hat sent me." For this reason, principally, Christ
 led *The Word of God*, his words are God's words,
 as the mouth-piece of God, the voice of God. Oh
 we always heard his word as the voice of God! For
 reason he is called "*The faithful and true witness*"
 s is my beloved Son," said the voice from heaven,
 r him." Now let us hear his testimony (Luke iv.),
 he preached in the synagogue, quoting from Isa.
 we read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;
 use the Lord hath *anointed me to preach good tidings*
 the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-
 ed, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the
 ing of the prison to them that are bound; to

proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." And (Luke iv. 21) he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears: 'I have given unto them *The words* which thou gavest me."

III. "They have received them." I would he could say that of all of us! Happy would it be for us! "They *have* received them." Observe, he takes credit for the success of his embassy, and acknowledges as mediator not only that he is entrusted with "*The words*," and the fulfilment of "*The words*," and the preservation of "*The words*," but also with the communication of "*The words*" and the application of "*The words*" to his people. He is speaking here, as he always speaks in his prayers, responsible for them, and as the condition of the fulfilment of the covenant between the Father and him. This is the account he renders: "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them"—not as *notions*, not as *opinions*, but as thy very words. And "they have known"—in the reception of them—"that I came forth from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." All his teaching and example were intended and calculated to bring our hearts up to the Father, that we might see that Father's love *the reason* for all things, even the reason why he was here to intercede for us, and to c

ward of the merit of the travail of his soul on our
 self.

Now, let us draw a few practical conclusions from
 this statement.

The knowledge of God, as our Father, and of his Son
 Christ as that Father's gift to sinners, is *the end of
 revelation*. If you have not attained to this know-
 ledge, so far as you are concerned, it is in vain the
 prophecies have been written.

Where we learn what is the surest, truest, and most
 comfortable ground and resting-place for our faith, *The
 Lord Christ spake*, for he says: "I have given unto them
 the words which thou gavest me." Not his *miracles*; he
 does not allude to them; they are evidence,—no doubt
 a true evidence, precious evidence,—"the works bear
 witness of me," he says; but there is higher evidence.
 It is less was it their *frames* and *feelings* which he
 gave of as the ground of their assurance and confi-
 dence. No, no, "*the words* which thou gavest me" I
 have given them. Oh! to examine them more carefully,
 to live upon them more abidingly! Here, too, we
 have the ground of peace, and joy, and comfort, and
 blessing. May we hide *the words* in our hearts
 for his name's sake who gave them to us.

Again, the words which the Lord Jesus Christ gave
 us are only received truly by us when they lead us
 to believe in him. You may listen to them, you may
 talk about them, you may profess them to any amount,
 until the words which the Father gave to Christ,
 which Christ has given to us, are so received by us
 that we believe on him whom God hath sent, we have

never profited, we have never truly received them. T added to this (read John v. 24): "Verily, verily, I unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not be brought into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life. So that if we do not know we have passed from death unto life, if we do not know that we shall not be condemned, if we do not know that we are forgiven, we have really never *taken in the full truth of the testimony*, even the words which the Father gave unto Christ to give unto us ; and this is a very practical consideration.

Observe what Christ considered the highest commendation *of his people*. "They have received the words which thou gavest me, they have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

And lastly, observe what the Lord Jesus evidently considers one of the highest commendations *he can give of himself*, when he now presents himself as mediator before his Father. "I have given them the words which thou gavest me." *Precious words they are!* When shall we value them as we ought? when shall we take them to our hearts, and receive them with meekness, and gladness, and with faith, and having received them as a witness of them to others?

13

pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."

—JOHN xvii. 9.

PROPERLY speaking, this is the actual commencement of our Lord's prayer for his disciples. His previous utterances were but introductory. Was ever prayer so introduced before? He who pleads is the Son of God—the mediator. He could say to his Father, "I know that thou hearest me always." What mighty things are here! He pleads, *The occasion*—"The hour is come" (next day he was to die). He pleads *relationship*, "Father, the hour is come." He pleads *commission*, "Thou hast given him power over all things, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." He pleads *his consecrated life*, "I have glorified thee on the earth," "I have manifested thy name." He pleads *his finished work*, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," "I have glorified thee in thy name," "I am now about to wash their feet with water, that the fire of accepting love come down upon the altar of the offering, and then, Father, "glorify thou me in thy thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," "that thy Son also may glorify thee."

That prayer *has been answered*, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is in the highest heavens now,—that glorious Spirit (and it is like dew from God upon the soul to vivify it), who is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh,

our own brother,—for albeit he is our King and he is our Brother,—our Husband, our Friend, Shepherd, Priest, and King, he is at the right hand of God now, and all the powers of heaven and earth are committed into his hands,—those same hands which were once pierced for us upon the cross. More do we love him, “God raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God.” 1 Pet. i. 21. “He hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: he hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 20-22). Oh, for faith to grasp this great fact! We often tremble here below in the contemplation of the weakness of ourselves, the malice of our enemies, and the difficulties we have to grapple with, yet our risen Head and King is above them all, they have all been put *under his feet*,—is it possible he could have them under his feet, and yet allow them to really to hurt us? *It is impossible.* The fact that the crown of the universe is upon his head secures us; the fact that principalities and powers are beneath his feet and subject to his sway, secures the soul that looks to him by faith, and enables us to say as the Apostle doth, “Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.”

his intercession of our Lord for his disciples, and all who shall believe on him through their word," that an illustration of the intercession he is now going on for his people at the right hand of God. Our great High Priest he has ascended into the highest heavens "with his own blood." What Aaron did upon the great day of atonement on earth, the Son of God has done in the temple of heaven; he has gone in, not to the mercy seat made with hands, but to the throne of God, which is the image of the true, but to the very throne of God; not with the blood of bulls and of goats, which could not take away sin, and which were but pictures and emblems of the true, but with his own precious blood, and there he appears "in the presence of God." He came "for us," he lived "for us," he died "for us," he rose "for us," ascended "for us," entered the highest heavens "for us," presents his blood "for us," intercedes "for us," prepares a place "for us," has caused the mansions "for us," has caused the Holy Scriptures to be written "for us," has sent down the Holy Ghost "for us," and will come again "for us." Oh, a precious Christ! With mortal ears we cannot come to him *there*, but faith, gathering its inspiration from his prayer *here* on earth, can enter somewhat into the spirit of that intercession. "Behold me, my Father, my co-equal Son! thou knowest the glory which I had with thee before the world was, thou knowest how I loved thee before the world was, thou knowest how I laid myself, and became so poor that I had nothing to lay my head, thou knowest how thy judgment for sin did fall on me, thou knowest how thou didst give me my soul an offering for sin, thou knowest the

reward of my travail is that those who believe o might never suffer." "I am about to be wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities, chastisement of their peace is upon me, that by stripes they might be healed: Father, it is *I who* it is *my* voice thou hearest, I have glorified thee on earth, and I pray for them."

When men urge a petition they use such arguments as they believe likely to most influence the parties whom they plead, and so does Christ in his prayer. He who was eternally in the Father's bosom, well knew the delight that Father had in his own dear people, he knew the intense complacency with which he regarded them, the interest he had in them, and that he had gathered them to him to be gathered from their wanderings, washed from their sins, have their ignorance instructed, be clothed in the best robe that heaven's wardrobe could provide for them, made members of his own body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and presented by him without spot or wrinkle, accepted in the beloved, to share his kingdom, to live in his life, to be possessed of his joy, to know his peace, and to sit upon his throne for ever. He received them as the pledge of his Father's love. "Thine they were and thou gavest them to me." I glorified in being their High Priest (Heb. v. 5). I know how their salvation redounds to thine honour, and I praise thee with joy, and shall yet fill heaven and earth with thy praise. "I pray for them;" they have destroyed themselves, but in me is their help. "I pray for them;" they have polluted their souls, but I am their salvation. "I pray for them!" they have been lost, but I am c

and to save that which was lost; they have been
 and naked, and poor, and captives, and in prison,
 my Spirit is upon me, Father, because thou hast
 ted me to open the eyes of the blind, to unstop the
 of the deaf, to open the prison doors to them that
 bound, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the
 table year of the Lord. "I pray for them," for I
 received them *at thy hand*, I undertake for them, I
 at my fulness for them, and I will lay down my life
 em. I ask nothing for myself, I ask no return for
 the travail of my soul, I seek no honour, I desire no
 ation, I will have no glory apart from them. "*They*
mine;" they are thine Hephzi-bahs, thy delight
 them; they are thy Beulahs, thou art married to
 ; they are thine own "peculiar treasure," they were
 ed for thy glory; they shall shew forth thy praise;
 er, I pray for them. The world hates them, but "I
 for them;" they oftentimes tremble in the conscious-
 of their weakness and their unworthiness, but "I
 for them." Satan desires to have them, that he
 sift them as wheat, but "I pray for them;" true,
 are poor, tempest-tossed, oftentimes sore let and
 red in running the race set before them, but "I
 for them." They are needy—so needy that no one
 myself and thyself can understand the depth of their
 but "I pray for them." They often forget to pray
 emselves, but, "I pray for them." *Keep them* through
 own name, *sanctify them* through thine own truth,
them in thine own self; and *I will that* they be
 me where I am, that they may behold my glory
 a thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before

the foundation of the world." This is the Lord's prayer and as faith rises into the contemplation of it, we are enabled to exclaim with the Apostle—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are *more than conquerors* through him that loved us.

There is a very solemn restriction in this prayer which we must not overlook. Men of the world! as well as women of the world! as you are not ashamed to style yourselves, what do you make of this? "*I pray not for the world.*" Oh! this wretched, disappointing, condemned world! how can that people cling to it as they do? its god is not God. "The god of this world," you know who he is. Its prince is not our Prince; "the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Observe the connection even in the text, "I pray not for the world, *but* for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." There are two classes, observe: one he calls the world, the other does not pray for it;—the other he describes as "them which thou hast given me out of the world," "who have received my word," who "have believed that thou hast sent me," and those who "have known surely that thou art he that came out from thee."

Now, let us consider this solemn matter.

The world contrasted with the Lord's people.

The character of the world.

The judgment of the world.

The message of God to the world.

The command of God to his people in the world.

Know very well that this is not fashionable teaching, but it is God's truth for all that.

See verse 14, "I have given them" (those for whom he is praying) "thy word;" and the world hath hated them, "because they are *not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" Oh! keep that contrast before your minds; and let me tell you, that just in proportion as we keep his word, and live closely with God, the world will hate us, it will call us a very disagreeable, disagreeable, unpleasant sort of people; and it is in order to be this, so many who call themselves Christians, do not keep their standard. They have not enough of love for Christ in their hearts to make them stand the brunt of the world's sneer and contempt, that is the reason we have so many such unsatisfactory Christians. It is a very easy Christianity which admits of our being all day long in the world, and half-an-hour with God in the morning and evening; the world will never despise you for that, nay, the world will quite applaud you, and say you are the right sort of Christian. In Luke xvi. 8, the Lord distinguishes between the children of the world and the children of light. They are two distinct families: "the children of the world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." So they are. If God's children would take the pains in reference to *their portion* that the world

takes in reference to *its portion*, how rich would the how happy would they be ; but they do not. A John viii. 23 : "Ye are from beneath ; I am from above ; ye are of this world : I am not of this world." brethren, if this means anything at all, truly it means this—that all they who are truly of this world, are from beneath ; all that appertains to the world, its principles, and its practice, are from beneath, and belong to beneath. This is true, else what does the contrast mean ? Do not gloss over those contrasts, we ought to think and pray over them. In 1 John v. 19, we have another remarkable contrast between the world and the people of God : "we know that *we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*" Imagine any man having the temerity in these days to stand up before a large congregation, and make a statement of this kind ; well, they would say, "There is an uncharitable statement, there is a self-righteous individual." But what saith the Spirit-taught Evangelist ? He is speaking of two classes ; those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who are born of God, for "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" (verse 5) ; of such he says, "We know that we are of God," but of all the rest "the whole world lieth in wickedness ;" all unconscious even of their danger, asleep, careless, and lost ! To this contrast add the fearful words of our text, "*I pray for them, I pray not for the world.*"

2. Now the character of the world. This has already been described in the passages I have quoted, but let us add some others. Gal. i. 4 : "Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from

at evil world, according to the will of God and our
 er." There we see the object of his death was to
 er us from this present evil world—"I pray not for
 world." See John xv. 18, 19: "If the world hate
 ye know that it hated me before it hated you."
 n the Lord was here on earth, it was not the low
 of earth—the uneducated and the depraved—that
 d him, it was the rulers, the priests,—*aye, the priests,*
the high priest at the head of them,—they hated him,
 were "the world," although ordained priests, and
 Pharisees, the religionists of the day, they hated him
 persecuted him to the death. "If the world hate
 ye know that it hated me before it hated you."
pray not for the world." And see again, 1 John ii.
 "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and
 lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the
 er, but is of the world." "*I pray not for the world.*"
 James iv. 4: "The friendship of the world is
 ity with God. Whosoever, therefore, will be a
 d of the world, is the enemy of God." "*I pray not*
the world."

. The judgment of the world. It is a condemned
 d; it is under sentence. Not more truly was Sodom
 emned to destruction than is the world. "The
 a also and the works that are therein shall be burned
 Not more truly was the earth in the time of Noah
 er sentence than is this present world. And the
 ostle Peter charges men with being willingly ignorant
 he fact that as the first world was destroyed by
 er, so "the world that now is, is reserved unto fire
 nst the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly

men." In John xvi. 8, we read that the Comforter, when he should come, would convince or "reprove" the world of sin, because they believe not on me, because of my righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye shall see me no more; *of judgment*, because the prince of this world is judged." It is only the long suffering of God that brings it to pass that this world is yet spared. God waits till his message is heard and his people gathered; he waits if peradventure those led captive by Satan at his will may recover themselves from the power of the devil, and claim that repentance, forgiveness, and pardon, which he delights to bestow. "The world passeth away," and "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3-6).

4. God's message to the world: "Behold the I am of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." *Behold him!* "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish." "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

5. The command of God to his own people in the world: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," said the Lord, "and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father to the fatherless, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "Be not conformed to this world"

ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." "Ye are not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself undefiled from the world." Believer! you are no more in the world than Lot would have been in Sodom; you are no more safe for your life than Noah would have been upon a mountain when he *got into the ark*. "I pray not for the world." There is no atonement for the world. There is no intercession of Christ for the world; his intercession is founded at all times upon his atonement. There is no hope for the world; it is a lost world, a damned world; it is the enemy of God; it is the kingdom of him the world worships. There is no safety in flying from it to the Rock cleft to shelter you. "I will save you, I will shelter you, I will keep you, I will pray for you. But, Father, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me" "*out of the world,*" "for they are thine." The error of our day is that people are trying to serve two masters—the world with one hand and God with the other; *it cannot be done*: we must either come out of the world and be with Christ, or we must sink with the world into the condemnation of those who reject Christ.

May God grant a blessing with these words, for the sake of him who is at the right hand of God, and who liveth to make intercession for all those who come

unto God by him ; but (let his words sink deep
our hearts) “ *I pray not for the world.*”

11

“ *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine ; and
glorified in them.*”—JOHN xvii. 10.

PERHAPS it would have been better not to
separated this verse from that which precede.
reading them together we are enabled more disti
and fully to appreciate the amazing argument of
blessed Lord—“I pray for them : I pray not for
world, but for them which thou hast given me ; for
are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are n
and I am glorified in them.”

The first thing that strikes us, in these words, i
distinct and emphatic assertion by our blessed Lor
his equality with God ; the most convincing proo
this fact are not found in direct assertions, bu
those statements which imply and take for granted
Divinity.

In the original, the word “all” is neuter, “*all t*
that are mine, are thine, and thine are mine.” It
much as to say, we are one, as he afterwards stat
verses 11 and 22—All things that are mine, all th
belonging to me personally, essentially, and relati
are thine, Father ; and all that belongs to thee—
nature, thy name, thine eternity, thy perfections, t
attributes, thy fulness, thy dominion, all that thou
an interest in, thy kingdom, thy heavens, thy th

people, thy glory—"all thine are mine;" "we are equally, equally, and alike interested in them; for all things that are mine are thine, and all that are thine are mine." Imagine an archangel using language such as this; imagine the absurdity of the highest created being making such a statement—it would be blasphemy; therefore, we are led to this most blessed conclusion, he is very God, of very God.

See, further, a parallel passage (chapter xvi. 14, 15). The Lord is promising the Comforter; he says, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Then he explains, "All things which the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

The Spirit doth not take directly from the Father, but shew the things of the Father to the people through God, because Jesus is *The Mediator*, Jesus is the medium. It pleased Jehovah that in Jesus should all His grace dwell for us, it is out of the fulness that is in Jesus, the Holy Ghost takes to shew to us and to draw upon us. See another passage. (I Cor. ii. 9-11.) "That which hath not been seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." And then (verse 16), "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he might instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Thus the Spirit through the Son reveals and communicates to the people of God "*the all things*" of the Father.

In Heb. ii. 8, we have the Spirit's own comment upon the extent of the expression—"all things." "For he hath put all things in subjection under his feet. Forasmuch as that he put all in subjection under him, *he left nothing that is not put under him.*" Apply this rule to the passage before us; all the things belonging to man are thine, my Father, and all that belongs to thee are mine—without *exception*, and without *limitation*. Taken together these passages together, the great truth brought out is—that there is a mutual interest *in each other*, and in all things that pertain to *and belong to each other*, between the Persons of the glorious and adorable Trinity. The three Persons are united together in the Divine essence; they have equal communion and fellowship in all Divine attributes, and an equal and mutual interest in the redeemed people. This is very deep truth, but it stands on *a rock*. The Father has as much interest in the salvation of the redeemed as Christ has, and Christ and the Holy Ghost have as much interest in the salvation of the redeemed as the Father has. The Father's love gave Christ to the world; Christ's love gave himself for them, and the Holy Ghost's love reveals and applies the salvation of God to them.

While our Lord expresses himself thus—"All things are thine and thine are mine," he undoubtedly regards his people as those in whom both the Father and the Son are *peculiarly* interested. "They are thine," "They are mine," and "I am glorified in them." *All* of them are mine, all of them are

the weak, the needy, the most ignorant of them, the youngest babe in the family, as much so as the most fully grown towards the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. All of them and *all things pertaining to them* "are mine," "are thine;" they are mutually, equally, alike, and everlastingly. What secret our blessed Lord revealed to his listening disciples! how they must have wondered as he thus spake concerning them, and not only concerning them, but thank God, concerning us, if we believe on him; verse 20 includes us, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through thy word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." It was mutual love gave them *to me*, and gives me *to them*, and mutual love to them secures that the Holy Ghost shall *dwell within them*; our interest in them brought down to be their Saviour to take upon mine own self their debt, and die in their place; our interest in them causes me to give my life to be their life, myself to be their portion, and the glory thou gavest me to be their crown. "*Thine* they were" originally by election, purpose, and grace; "*mine*" they are irrevocably, by election, for I made them ("all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made"); *mine* they are by gift, for "thou gavest them to me;" *mine* by purchase, for I lay down my life for them; *mine* by the conquest of my grace, for "I manifested to them thy name; *mine* by the voluntary surrender of themselves, for they have come

to me as their refuge, their Saviour, their hiding-place and their Friend ; “ *mine* they are ”—my portion ; members of my body, of my flesh, and of my bone ; *mine* they are—my bride whom I shall present unto thee without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, adorned with heavenly jewelry, clothed in the garments of salvation ; *mine* they are—my church, my fulness, the which I fill all in all ; my kingdom, what would my kingdom be without them ? what would *my* throne be without them ? and they are my glory, “ I am glorified in them.”

Wonderful language ! and he means it all ; *he means it all*. Is it any marvel we should read of “ the length and breadth, and depth, and height of a love, which passeth knowledge.” This is the result of it, this is the expression of it. *God’s commended love !* “ All things are thine, and thine are mine ; and I am glorified in them.” They are God’s children, they are Christ’s church, they are the Holy Ghost’s habitation,—they are Jesus’ beloved ones, they are his bride, and therefore they are the Holy Ghost’s charge, and he shall educate them for the positions that the Son’s love and Father’s love have appointed for them. They are Jehovah’s portion, therefore they are Christ’s purchase, and therefore the Holy Ghost dwells in them “ the earnest of inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” They are the people “ formed for himself “ created for his glory ;” and they are “ the glory of Christ.” He will come by-and-by “ to be glorified in them,” and meanwhile, in their tribulations “ the Spirit of glory doth rest upon them,” till “ God be all in all

Really, thought becomes giddy, and our poor feeble hands weary, in contemplating truths like these, but they are resting-places for faith; and it was in order that our faith might be strengthened, our hope established, and our love deepened, that the Lord uttered these words to his Father—not in private, but in the hearing of his disciples, “All mine are thine, and thine are mine.” We have been mutually engaged in choosing, redeeming, sanctifying, saving, keeping, and glorifying them; we are mutually interested in their persons, wants, troubles, difficulties, temptations, and warfare; in the formation of their characters, and the consummation of their happiness. “He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye:” whoso offendeth one of the least of them, “it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea:” “Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name because ye belong to Christ, he shall in nowise lose his reward.” “As I am, so are they in this present world;” “and where I am there shall they be also,” for “all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.”

The fulness of God is our “portion,” God is our “rock,” God is our “refuge,” God is our “high tower,” God is our “redeemer,” God our “sanctifier,” God our “preserver,” God our “Father,” God our “husband,” God our “salvation,” and “our God.” How secure we must be who have believed on his name!

We are taught in Scripture that our security flows from three great facts. The Father has *loved us* with an everlasting love—a love that never changes; Christ,

in resurrection glory ever lives to make *intercession* *us*; pleading his work finished and accepted; and (the Holy Ghost *indwells in us*. Here is "a three-cord hard to be broken." Will God lose those he loved with an everlasting love? Will God forget that he raised Christ from the dead to mediate for, and whom Christ ever lives to intercede? Will God cast those to whom he has sent the Holy Ghost, that might dwell in them, and be in them "a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life," and that they might be builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit? If these things be so—if "mine are thine, and thine are mine," who can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus?

The Intercessor not only prays for the final salvation of those for whom he intercedes, but for their *preservation* in this present evil world (see verse 11), "Holy Father keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me." He prays, in verse 17, for their *sanctification*. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." In verses 23, 26, he prays for *their comfort*, that they may know they have been loved by the Father, even as the Father loves him; and, in verse 22, that they may be *glorified* with him, beholding the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. Now, if the things be so, we *are safe*, completely safe, and we ought to be happy. Only unbelief and distrust can interfere with our abiding happiness. Our peace ought to flow as a river, and our righteousness like the waves of the sea. If these things be so, we may well be assured that *all things are working together for our good*. C

It is true that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are mutually, equally, and alike interested in us, and that anything that may be wrong, really wrong with us? We may be tried, we may be tempted, we may be troubled on every side; we may be in deep waters; but we shall come out of the tribulation, and the trial of our faith shall be much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," and shall "be found unto us, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of the Son of Christ." If "all mine are thine, and thine are mine," then *our interests* temporal and spiritual, for this world and for eternity, are *the care of God*, and surely we ought to be happy, and go on our way rejoicing; unbelief can hinder us. If these things be so, are we "accepted in the beloved," *the ear of God* open to our prayers; our *inheritance* is chosen for us, "all things are yours," for "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

There are three practical directions growing out of this statement of privileges. The first is in 2 Cor. vii. 1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and deceitful passions, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Another is in 2 Tim. i. 12; "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And the third is in John xiv. 1 (our Lord's own directions to his disciples), "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

15

“*And I am glorified in them.*”—JOHN xvii. IO.

WHEN we remember who it is that is speaking, whom he is speaking, of whom he is speaking, and circumstances under which he speaks, these words are very wonderful. Like the Apostle of the Gentiles, he must be content to contemplate them, and exclaim, “the depths!”

Already the prayer had ascended—“Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee;” glorify him by supporting him through death, by accepting his sacrifice, by raising him out of death, and giving him glory, that thy people’s faith and hope may be in thee (1 Pet. i. 21). Such is evidently the meaning of the first part of the prayer. Then, again, he had prayed, “Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” A wonderful petition! It cannot mean less than to exalt me in my manhood into the majesty which thou, Son of God, I enjoyed with thee before all worlds; then he adds, “all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified *in them*”—by which words he does not only plead that they should be glorified, but that their glory should be associated with his own,—glorify thou in me, and glorify me in them. We have a somewhat similar prayer in 2 Thess. i. 10-12, where the Apostle speaks of the time when “he shall come to be glorified in his saints,” and then adds, “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy

his calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power: that the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ."

"I am glorified in them." Let us endeavour to enter more fully into this great statement. He who speaks is "the Father of glory;" he had for a time laid aside that glory, and taken upon him the form of a servant; the great redemptive work he came to do was all but done, and he was about to ascend into the glory he had with the Father before the world was. He *has gone* into that glory, he is reigning there *now*, and he will continue to reign there until, according to his own sure word of promise, he shall come again in the Father's glory, and in his own glory, and in the glory of the holy angels. In heaven he is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" he fills the heaven of heavens with his glory, and by-and-by he will fill earth as well as heaven with his glory; yet, hear him, "*I am glorified in them.*" The conclusion is much more easily drawn by the spiritual mind than can be expressed by mortal tongue.

What is glory? Glory is the display of the fulness of God, the glory of Christ is the manifestation of what Christ is. So we read (John xvi. 14), speaking of the Spirit, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The manifestation and communication of Christ is the glory of Christ, as the light of the sun is the glory of the sun; as the mani-

fested beauty and fragrance of the flowers of the earth are their glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork;" but he has something far more special, "I am glorified in them." As it was in the temple of old, the glory of the Lord appeared more in the temple than in all the earth beside, so it is with Christ's people, they are the temple where he doth display, and will display, his glory more than in all the earth, aye, more than in all heaven beside; therefore he says, "I am glorified in them."

Again, the glory of the Lord is manifested in the kingdom of his providence; he upholds all things which he hath made with the word of his power, "because he is mighty and for that he is strong in power not faileth." But much more in upholding, sustaining, keeping, blessing, and supplying the need of his people, is he glorified. It is in his dealings with the sons of men that the Lord Jesus Christ most manifests, and, there he most glorifies himself, as it is in giving the Lord Jesus Christ to the sons of men, Jehovah has most glorified himself. We are the empty vessels, into which the Lord Jesus Christ pours the fulness of his grace, into which, by-and-by, he will pour forth the fulness of his glory. It is in redeeming sinners Jesus is glorified; it cost him but a word to create the world, but to redeem a poor sinner's soul cost him all that tremendous stoop from heaven's glory to earth's wilderness, the cross, and the curse. It is in regenerating sinners that the Lord Jesus manifests his glory. What but himself could take a dead soul, and regenerate a soul with his own eternal life? this is truly a wonder.

y of the glory of his grace ; matter does not resist power, the sinner does ; sun, moon, stars, earth, and gave him no opposition when he created them— Oh ! the sinner doth his best ; the world, the flesh, the devil do their best to resist him in the new creation ; and if his glory is manifested in the natural world, which never did or could resist his power, how much more in the new creation. It is in the conversion of sinners Christ is glorified, “in turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, filling their eyes with new objects, their hearts with new affections, their hopes with new themes ; going forth for their salvation, delivering them from the lowest pit of ruin, bursting the bonds with which the devil had enthralled them, securing to them liberty, even free access to God, washing their sins away in his precious blood, clothing them with the spotless robe of his righteousness,—but this is not all,—opening the gates of God to them, and sending the Holy Ghost to dwell in them to enjoy it. Oh ! *here* it is that Christ is most glorified. “*I am glorified in them.*” By-and-by when he shall place their crowns upon their heads, and listens to their praises ascribing to him the kingdom, and the glory, and the praise for having “redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and made them kings and priests unto God and unto his Father,” then shall be consummated that saying, “He shall see of the fruit of his soul and be satisfied :” he shall be glorified in their glory, for they shall be glorified in him. “*I am glorified in them.*” We feel as if we could dwell on this sentence, and never weary of the wonderful

truths it presents to us. It is a precious prism, aspect of it sheds forth divine radiancy. Angelic cannot display Christ's strength so much as weakness does, the riches of heaven cannot display Christ's fulness so much as their poverty does, holiness of archangels cannot speak his praise so much as the covering of their unrighteousness does, anthems of the seraphim cannot utter his glory so much as praises of his redeemed shall; and not all the works of heaven's hosts can render to him so grateful an offering or crown him with so rich a crown, as the love of pardoned people.

"I am glorified in them." Yes, every attribute of God is glorified in them: when "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places shall be made known the manifold wisdom of God," it is by *the church* that it is to be done (Eph. iii. 10). His power is glorified in them, his faithfulness is glorified in them. He is faithful to his promise, notwithstanding all their failings and weaknesses, notwithstanding all their unworthiness, he does not forget his promise to them. His goodness is glorified in them, goodness that bears with them, goodness long suffering, and abundant in its truth, by no means lowering the standard of his justice, or abating one iota of his law, in no way disparaging the holiness of his character, and yet providing a plan to make them "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Moreover his *mercy* has been magnified in them, and his *grace* and divine love! "Herein is love." "As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." Every one who loves Christ is glorified in them: he would have nothing

teacher but for them, he would have nothing to do
 High Priest but for them, he would have no re-
 ed subjects to reign over but for them. We read
 r. iv. 6), that God's glory is manifested in the face
 us Christ ; but, here, Jesus Christ tells his Father,
 a glorified in them." Wonderful! wonderful!
 oubtedly, his Apostles were uppermost in his mind
 he uttered the words of our text. He *had been*
 ed in them, for they had "first trusted in Christ"
 oh! he is glorified by those who trusted in him);
 had left their little "all" to follow him, and Jesus
 s glorified ; they had cast upon him all their care,
 committed to him the entire of their souls' salvation
 first to last ; he acknowledges it to his Father, and
 of them, "I am glorified in them." We must not
 ook how very little they knew, how very little they
 attained unto, when the Lord uttered these words ;
 Christ doth never overlook his own grace, planted
 s own Spirit in the heart of his child ; it may be
 en there ; it may be well-nigh *overwhelmed with*
ption, but the Lord knows it, the Lord acknow-
 s it, the Lord recognises it ; he knows that his own
 the incorruptible seed, is the germ of eternal glory,
 he takes credit for it. "I am glorified in them."
 he was *about to be* glorified by them. When the
 Jesus had ascended into heaven, the Holy Ghost
 d come down upon these men to lead them into all
 , and make them the inspired communicators of
 word of God to the sons of men ; their testimony to
 ame was to overspread the earth, "and they loved
 heir lives unto the death;" they knew "whom they

had believed, and were persuaded he was able to do that which they had committed unto him against that day;" and "they counted not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy, and in the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." He was about to send them to open the blind eyes, to bring out sinners "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: that they might . . . have an increase among them which are sanctified by faith that cometh of him." He knew that he would be glorified in them; therefore he says to his Father, "I am glorified in them."

And what was their subsequent life's history but a story of the goodness, the love, the care, the patience, the gentleness, the tenderness of the Lord Jesus Christ towards them? He walked with them through fire and waters, according to the word in which he caused them to hope; when all men forsook them, the Lord stood by them and strengthened them, delivering them from every foe and from every fear; he took them out of many waters, from many an horrible pit and the mire of clay, and set their feet upon a rock, and established their goings, putting new songs into their mouths, cheering their hearts, enlightening their paths, scattering their foes to the four winds. "*I am glorified in them.*"

But we may not confine the Lord's words to the eleven Apostles. In verse 20 he tells us himself, "I have prayed for these alone, but for them also will I pray, that they also shall believe on me through their word." Below

have believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord glorified *in us*; only think of it—the Lord glorified in us. Let me tell you, he is not glorified by what he *gets us*, but by what he *bestows upon us*; we are the vessels into which he pours grace, and in doing so he is glorified in us; by-and-by, having filled us with grace, he will fill us with glory too; and in doing so he will be glorified in us. The only possible way in which we can glorify him here is by *receiving* him: “What I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me, I will *take* the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.” The utmost we can do to glorify him here is just to live upon him, to abide in him; never to go beyond his promise for comfort or guidance, never to look to other than him for faith and hope; never to go beyond his own bosom for a resting-place; never to be the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness to the end of our sin; and to make mention of his righteousness and of his righteousness only.

The life we live, if we are living souls, is *his*; the light we walk in, if we have light at all, is *his*; that we may be glorified; every victory we gain is *his* triumph, he maketh us always to triumph; every blessing in the spiritual building is grace, every brightening of our spiritual day is grace. All our fruitfulness, our gladness, all our comfort, the foundation upon which we stand, and by-and-by the top-stone with which we shall be crowned *is all of Christ*, that he may be glorified. Therefore he says, “I am glorified in them.” Now, consider the evident object which the Lord had in view in thus pleading for his people with his

Father ; when he says, I am glorified in them, it wa
 if he had said : " Father, my glory is thy special del
 I know it, thou knowest it, thou hast created the
 verse for my glory ; there is not an angel that wing
 way through heaven's space that has not been cre
 for my glory ; providence, in all its departments, is
 my glory, and eternity is for my glory ; that glor
 dear to thee, Father, '*I am glorified in them.*' I ca
 be glorified if they are not blessed." This is God's
 truth, and we ought not to take a lower standard ;
 should we when God gives us such an high and pre
 one? our glory (if we have come to Christ by faith
 taken him for our Saviour) is as sure as his own ;
 remember (in Rom. viii. 30) that marvellous chai
 love, beginning in grace and culminating in gl
 " whom he called, them he also justified : and who
 justified, them he also glorified." *It is all there.*

Again, " Father, all mine are thine, and thine
 mine." Thou art glorified in me, and I am glorifie
 thee, for " all mine are thine ;" the things that belon
 thee belong to me, and the things which belong to
 belong to thee, " and I am glorified in them." T
 the glory of the soul, which believes on Jesus, and
 whom Jesus intercedes, is bound up with God's
 glory. In Jer. xiv. 20, 21, we find a marvellous a
 ment in prayer, apparently founded on this fact :
 acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the inic
 of our fathers ; for we have sinned against thee.
 not abhor us, for thy name's sake, *do not disgrac*
throne of thy glory : remember, break not thy cove
 with us."

Again, "I am glorified in them," *all of them!* The Father had laid on his loving heart all his children, all his believing ones, to the end of time; every one who ever for ever would believe, cast their care upon him and trust him. "I am glorified in them." To confine this promise merely to the eleven Apostles would be to ascribe to Christ but a very limited glory indeed. Nay, he speaks of all who shall believe upon him through his word—all of them, the weakest as well as the strongest, the neediest one (perhaps most of all the neediest one), for, after all, the greater the need he supports, the greater the glory he manifests, and the more glory he manifests, the greater the glory he receives; and the debtor that owes five hundred pence as much, perhaps even more than from the debtor that owes fifty. Each forgiven will he not love much?

Again, "I am glorified in them." I believe it means much as this: "Father, let them have all the blessing they can contain; let them have all the communicable fulness of God; let them have all the happiness the Holy Ghost can enable them to enjoy; give them as much of thy strength, as much of thy love, as much of thy righteousness, as much of thyself, *as it is possible for creatures in union with thy Son to possess, and I am glorified in them.*" Oh! certainly, it means much and far more than I can tell. Again, Let their needs be thy care; let all that pertains to them belong to thee, except their sin, which I am about to take away by the sacrifice of myself. Watch over them in their weakness, comfort them in their sorrow, direct them in their difficulties, carry them in thine everlasting

arms, bear them to thy banqueting house, and let banner over them be love. This is his plea, "Father, Holy Father, keep them, sanctify them through truth, unite them, that they may be one, even as we are, and finally let them behold my glory which was with thee before the world was," for "I am glorified in them."

What a destiny awaits the people of God! We observed in the early part of this lecture that the Father was glorified in creation and in providence. The Son is glorified in redemption more than in either. The Father is glorified in regenerating his people, and he will be glorified by-and-by in raising them from the dead. Christ is the first-fruits of the glory of the resurrection. Thus, when he shall see of the travail of his soul, he will be satisfied in us, there shall not be a departure from the manifested glory of God which will not find its centre and its resting-place in his people; they are his *new creation*, they are the watched and cared-for objects of his providence, they are the purchased with his blood, they are the regenerated of his Spirit, they will be the risen ones of his power, the glorified ones of his glory. "He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Whatever *creating* power can do, whatever *providential* power can do, whatever *regenerating* power can do, whatever *redeeming* power can do, whatever *resurrection* power can do, whatever the Father of *the glory of God* can do, shall be manifested in us. Dear brethren, henceforth may "our conversation

aven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, "Lord Jesus Christ," who said of us on earth in prayer, and now says of us in heaven in the glory, "I glorified in them." Soon, soon, may he come again to glorify in his saints, and admired in all them who believe!

! now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee."—JOHN xvii. II.

HERTO, in a general way, and with such arguments we have tried from time to time to explain, our Lord commended his disciples, and not only his disciples, but all his believing people, to his Father's care. He proceeds to offer *particular* petitions for them, such as he knew by his own experience learned in our nature, and needed, such as was suited to their circumstances, their state, and their various exigencies. He knew the path that lay before them, and the ungenial place which he was so soon to leave them, for he had seen that way before.

Observe, all his petitions for them relate to spiritual blessings; all have reference to heavenly blessings; the Lord does not ask riches for them, nor honours, nor worldly influence, nor great preferments, but he does earnestly pray that they may be kept from evil, separated from the world, qualified for duty, and brought safely to heaven. Soul prosperity is the best temporal prosperity; and, in truth, all temporal prosperity, as

it is so called, is only real when it is in proportion to the prosperity of the soul. You remember how the beloved disciple brings out that thought in his epistle, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." Soul prosperity is the index of prosperity.

Before the petition which follows, "Holy Father, keep them," our Lord's prayer is prefaced with words we have just read. They seem to open our whole heart to us. What depths of thoughtful and tenderest sympathy, devoted consideration, and interest for them these words express, "And now I am no more in the world, but *these are in the world*, and I come to thee." Observe the pronouns, "I, these, they" through the chapter, all through the prayer. "I, these, they." How he entwines them together! "Now I am no more in the world, but *these* are in the world, and I come to *thee*." He had been with them hitherto, while with them he was their light, their comfort, their companion, their counsellor, their very presence and help. Were they accused, he was present to defend them; were they cast down, he was always ready to raise them up; were they mistaken, he was ever near to teach them; were they troubled, he was constant and unfailing Comforter. Now, circumstances were about to be altered. His bodily presence was to be no longer with them. "I am no more in the world."

We have here two important lessons, "I am no more in the world." There are many in our day

is to worship the *bodily presence* of Christ; they are
 ers in doing so. "I am no more in the world."
 body of Christ is at the right hand of God, not
 on earth, and all sensuous worship of him as
 at in body, whether in religious ordinances, or in
 more gross form of matter supposed to contain
 present the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, is
 ery. "*I am no more in the world.*" Would to
 that this sentence were written over many a pro-
 ly christian "altar," as it is called, and carried
 in the worship of many a professing Christian
 egation!

"I am no more in the world." Hitherto he had been.
 "He came into the world, the world was made by
 and the world knew him not; he came unto his own,
 his own received him not." He had been hated in the
 world, and now the world having hated him, was about
 to reject him, and finally to crucify him. His had been
 a weary and a suffering pilgrimage. "He looked for
 rest, but behold oppression; for righteousness,
 behold a cry." He asked for bread, and they gave
 him a stone; he sought a rest amongst us, the world
 gave him a grave; misrepresented, neglected, calum-
 nized, refused, and soon to be crucified; the "heir of
 the kingdom" was about to return home from the vineyard
 which God had sent him. "I am no more in the
 world." For thirty-three years he dwelt amongst us,
 a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we
 saw it were our faces from him; he was despised, and
 esteemed him not;" the foxes had holes, and the
 birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not

where to lay his head. The baptism with which he was to be baptized, and of which he said his soul was straitened till it was accomplished, was now about to descend upon him; his fight was nearly over. The Captain of our salvation was about to lay aside his shield and the sword, and the entire panoply; his last tear was soon to be shed, his last sorrow experienced, his last sigh uttered, his last conflict over; "I am no more in the world, *but these are in the world.*" The object of thought evidently in the Lord's mind as he uttered those words is truly wonderful, beautiful, sublime and touching, "I am no more in the world, but *these* are in the world, and I come to thee." I come, my Father, to be with thyself, "I come to thee!"—my rest, my peace, my home,—but "*these* are in the world." I come to thy presence where there is fulness of joy, and to thy right hand where there are pleasures for evermore. "I come"—to where the river of the water of life flows from the throne of God; but *these, these* are in the wilderness. "I come"—where no enemy can follow, where no temptation can assail me, where no weapon can distress me; but *these, these* are in the world. "I come"—to reap the trophies of my great victory. "I come"—to grasp the sceptre, to wear the crown, and to ascend the throne. I have been weary here, but I will soon be weary no longer; the way has been rough and thorny, but it is all over, my haven is almost reached. *yet these, "these are in the world."* "I come to thee, O Father, I come to see thy face, I come to listen to the praises and the redeemed ones' song, but "*these are in the world;*" I come where the harps are tuning

ts are waiting, and diadems are sparkling,—“I come
hee”—but these, “*these are in the world.*” How
atiful! how full of sympathy! Ah! brethren, what-
reasons made it expedient for us that he should go
y, it is very evident he was leaving his heart
nd him; and that, however exalted he may be at
right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, he does not
cannot forget his poor struggling followers here in
wilderness. As it was when he spent *that night* in
er with God, he looked down upon the tempest-
sed lake of Galilee and saw the little boat struggling,
the disciples toiling and rowing; although for a
ose he left them there till the *fourth* watch of the
t, yet in the end he came down to them walking
n the sea. As it was then, so it is now, and so it will
y-and-by; from the height of the glory he remembers
stempted, buffeted, and tempest-tossed followers in
wilderness. “I am no more in the world, but these
in the world.” See how, even in the anticipation of
hsemant, and of the cross, he was thinking *of them*;
tough the glory was before him, and the gates were
abling to fall back upon their everlasting hinges
t the King of Glory might come in, he was thinking
his people rather than of himself; neither the agony
f the cross, nor the glory of the throne, could make him
rlook the fact, “*these are in the world.*” Nay, because
y are the members of his body, of his flesh, and of
bones, he finds a double argument in petitioning his
her concerning them—a double reason why his
her should specially take care of them; first, because
is no more with them in their troubled lot here; and,

secondly, because he was coming to the glory and we were not coming with him. "Now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to them." Thus it is, whatever be the circumstances in which the glorious mediator may be placed, whether with the Father in heaven, he will draw forth arguments and reasons therefrom that his people may have the benefit.

"*These!* are in the world." We might also imagine him looking at them, in the intensity of love, and stretching forth his hands towards them, and speaking—"These!" thine own gift to me, my Father, thine own portion, my Father; *These!* the children, the little ones, the flock, my redeemed; "these are *in the world,*" they are my life, my bride, my joy, my glory, my portion, my all; "these are in the world;" they are of the world, our love hath taken them out of it, and they are raised above it, yet they are in the world.

Now consider the position that infinite love and wisdom has assigned to the people of God—"in the world"—the ungodly, unkind, ungenial world, which however it may "love its own," hates Christ and the things of Christ, and will always persecute those who are *for* Christ and *like* Christ. "These are in the world, the place of *trial*, where every principle shall be tested; the place of *danger*, where they are surrounded on every side with foes; the place of *temptation*, where every principle will be taken by the enemy of their souls to draw them aside; the deceiving world—so fair, so fascinating, oh! so disappointing; the world—which offers many promises much, but gives little; the world—where life withers, and joy is a mockery, and where there is not

ing, where corruptions are strong, and foes numerous, the flesh weak ; the world—that “lieth in wickedness” where the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour ; “a dry and barren land, where no water is.” “These are in the world,”—an unfruitful place, an unsatisfying place, an unsafe place, where each one must in his or her own way learn more and more quickly, and more or less deeply, that it is not a rest, and that it is polluted. Well, beloved, such is the place the God of all grace and love has placed his people in ; not the garden of the Lord, but the wilderness where every particle of food for their souls must come upon them from heaven, where all the waters that really refresh their spirits must flow to them from the rock,” where the only guide that can be depended upon is “the *pillar*” of their God. Not in peace are they placed,—far from it,—but in conflict ; not in the midst of friends,—far from it,—in the midst of foes, ready to take advantage of them at every turn ; not in abundance, but oftentimes in the conscious want of all things ; not clothed in glory, but in “the earthly house of this tabernacle ;” not in the banqueting house— not yet ; these are in the world.”

Our heavenly Father has good reasons for this ; not without his own wise purposes has he chosen the position of his people. Perhaps we may gather from the word of God *three* reasons why the Lord’s people are left in the world. He *might* immediately take them to glory. The moment the blood drops upon them, the moment the Spirit of God enters into them to shew them themselves, or to shew them Christ, the Lord might translate

them, and send a chariot of fire for them, as he did Elijah ; but he does not, and why ?

First, the Lord leaves his people in the world on pity to the world. "Ye are the light of the world." We are left here to illuminate this dark world ; oh, that we did it more faithfully ! There is not a ray of light to bless the world's darkness but that which emanates from the people of God. Would that we were more faithful as light bearers in this dark world ! Would to God that our homes, our families, our circle of acquaintance, the world around us were the better for our light ! We are the salt of the earth." The only redeeming thing in this world is the people of God, the only hope for it, the only thing that saves it from falling into absolute destruction is the few people of God scattered throughout. If it were not for their presence, God would not touch with the world one moment. Alas ! alas ! that the world so often loses its savour. There is nothing under the heavens so worthless as a savourless Christian, nothing so useless, few things more filthy than a smouldering lamp ! We are left here for the world's sake, to witness for our Lord, to tell the sweet story of his love, to gather the wanderers, to comfort the sorrowing ones, and, by God's grace, to point heavenward and lead the way. "These are in the world."

There is another reason why the Father leaves the world—for the formation of our Christian character. We are here to learn what it is to live by trust ; we are here to be exercised in faith and hope and love. The Father leaves us in the wilderness, where we have nothing but what we can get by faith from God, that we may

live upon God : this is necessary for the formation of Christian character, and we cannot tell what bearing it may have upon our position in glory hereafter. Here we are to live by hope—the anchor given to us. In the terms of life we are to cast our anchor out into the sea, and look for the day : “ This is the patience of the saints,” and the true position of the Christian. Here we are to learn to live on trust. If there were no trial of faith, of hope, and of love, how could faith and hope and love be exercised and strengthened ? But when he sends us into the world, he gives us this word, “ As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you ; continue ye in my love ;” circumstances will arise to lead you to question your love ; perhaps you will oftentimes feel alone, feel deserted, utterly weak, utterly forgotten ; oh ! remember that mine eyes are always on you, my heart always with you, my arms always around you ; when you walk in darkness, and have no light, let your trust be all in me, let your hope all in me, your love unchanged to me, for “ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

There is a third reason why we are in the world—for the honour of his own dear name—that he may be glorified. Salvation, under any circumstances, is difficult. Suppose us to be surrounded with all possible advantages, even under such circumstances, even as strong ones and not weak, as full and not empty, as holy and not unholy, the salvation of a soul would be a very difficult thing. The storms are tremendous, the foes so numerous, “ for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in high places." But I is a bark so frail that it needs not a wave but a rip to upset it; and see, it rides the wildest storm and st its way through the most fatal breakers. How is this Because Jesus is there. See a reed—a reed bruised, can be scarcely kept together, and yet all the power hell cannot crush it. See the smoking flax, that a of wind would extinguish, and yet all the powers of cannot extinguish it. How is this?—Because he is th Just like the bush burning but not consumed; so of poor people here: they are kept by the power of (through faith unto salvation, outriding every storm, sisting every temptation, carried triumphantly thro death and hell in spite of the world, the flesh and devil, and all that his own blessed name may be glorified, and that we may be compelled to acknowledge it is no more we that live but Christ that liveth in and that we may be taught to "live the life which now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of C who loved us, and gave himself for us." Not with strength but in our *weakness*, not with our fulness but our *emptiness*, not with our wealth but in our *poverty* conquers and overcomes the world, that he may glorified; these are the reasons why we are in world.

Lastly, the *comforts* he gives us while he sends into the world are not to be overlooked. "These ar the world." How assuring it is to hear him say it. *knows the fact*; we are not here unknown to him *pleads* the fact with the Father as a reason why Father should keep us: he has provided for ev

urgency, he has measured the world's storms, he holds the winds in the hollow of his hand, he has hushed its billows, he has counted every one of its difficulties, and he has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer : I have overcome the world."

"These are in the world," implying that it is only while they are in the world sorrow can assail them ; the trials, the difficulties, the conflicts, and the dangers *are here*, none of these things are in that world to which they are going ; there, there are joys without clouds, smiles without tears, songs without sorrows, eternity without sin ; only in the world does any difficulty exist.

"These are in the world," where his love to them never changes. How he loved them when he was with them in the world ! How he did bear with them, teach them, comfort them, and comfort them when he was with them in the world ! And will he do it less now that he is not with them and they are there alone ? will he think less, provide less for them, sympathize less with them, because they are so much the more needy ? *That is not like Christ.* Nay, brethren, he accounts himself to be so identified with them, that he seems to be jealous of the thought that he should be in glory while they are in the world, or that they should be in the world, and he not with them there, and because the Father's glory required, and their salvation required, that they should be separated. For a time, he turns it into an argument in their behalf, I am no more in the world with them, therefore, Holy Father, keep them as the apple of thine eye ! I come

to thee, and while I am with thee my heart is *there* *them*.

17

“*Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*”—JOHN xvii. 11.

WE have here the expression of “love that passes knowledge.” Not even in the garden or on the cross was there a fuller manifestation of the love of Christ than in this prayer, where in the anticipation of sufferings, and in the immediate prospect of entering into the glory he had with the Father before the world was, he seems to tell that Father, in the hearing of his people, that the glory would be no glory to him if it were not safely kept, as in the hollow of his hand, in the wilderness world in which he was about to leave them. Holy Father, keep them!

If any question arises in the mind suggesting “Why leave them in the world?” why say, “I am no more in the world?” why not say, “And now *we* are no more in the world?” Any such question is silenced and answered by the Saviour’s prayer. Surely there is a need for them. Not only is it expedient that he should go away, but truly it is equally expedient that his people should be left behind. What though it be a world of temptations, of disappointment, and of conflict, in which he leaves them, where trial that well-nigh breaks the heart, and

w that goes far to overwhelm the soul, surrounds
 on every side : he into whose hands they are com-
 ted is able to keep them from falling, and to present
 faultless before the presence of his glory with
 eding joy. That Holy Father has power enough,
 wisdom enough, and love enough, to remove his
 cle out of the world if it was for his own glory, or if it
 for their *real* good that he should do so. And since
 are left in the world, be sure it is neither for the
 or of their Father, nor for the real welfare of their
 us, that they should be removed out of the world.
 observe the Lord does not pray for it or even
 se it ; for he says (verse 15)—“ I pray not that thou
 eldest take them out of the world, but that thou
 eldest keep them from the evil.” The truth is, it
 cost our Lord Jesus Christ far more to leave his
 role in the world than it costs *them* to be in the world.
 i be true, “ He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple
 s eye,” if it be true that “ in all our afflictions he is
 flicted,” if it be true that “ we have not an High Priest
 n cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,”
 truly what the Apostle Paul says of himself in Col.
 2, is equally true of every member of Christ’s body
 in the world so long as he is exposed to trials and
 faculties, he is “ filling up that which is behind of the
 ffections of Christ in his flesh, for his body’s sake,
 h is the church.”

I have no doubt (indeed the word of God leaves us
 oom to doubt) that it is through the great grace of
 c, through the *long suffering* of God, his people are
 here in the wilderness : there are many lessons to

be learned here which are absolutely necessary, which could not be learned elsewhere, for the acquaintance with which, the people of God are left in the world.

1. The first great lesson we are left here to learn is—*what we are*. Oh! it is an humbling lesson to be spelt out day by day, and hour by hour; the unworthiness of self, the weakness, and worse than weakness, of self; the poverty, the worse than poverty, of self; the *corruption* of self. Where so likely or suitable a place to learn this as in the world? If we do not learn what self is here, I know not where else we can learn it.

2. We are left in the world to learn by practical experience the *emptiness of the creature*. We have our hopes, our affections, our desires, and we try to satisfy them, and to find a resting-place for them in the creature; we make the effort only to be disappointed. It is well to learn that there is not a resting-place in all creation for our poor hopes and hearts; we look for no position so calculated to teach us the lesson “in the world,” and depend upon it, God knows there is no place so calculated to teach us the lesson as in the world, else he would not leave us here, but he will take us to the place where we could learn most effectively these two great lessons—the unworthiness of self, the emptiness of the creature.

3. We are left here to learn *the glory of Christ*, the glory of his grace, the constancy of his love, the fullness, the inexhaustible fulness, laid up in him for our blessing. When the creature disappoints us, then we are taught

look to Christ for rest, and there we shall not be disappointed. The worthiness that is in him is brought out the more fully by the contrast of the unworthiness of a self. Here we are taught to learn the value of precious blood—the blood that cleanseth from all unrighteousness. Here we are taught to learn by practical experience that his strength is made perfect in our *weakness*. Well for us if in our earthly training, man goes down and self is prostrated in the dust, while Christ is lifted up. Well for us, if when hope fails to rest in the creature, it learns to cast its anchor in him. It is often when disappointments and weariness meet us here, Christ's love, tenderness, and sympathy are brought out most clearly and distinctly in all their fullness.

We are left to be *made partakers* and to have fellowship with Christ in his *sufferings*. The *only* way in which he can have fellowship with us here, is in *suffering*. He can have none with our unbelief, with our sins, our corruptions, or sin—only with our sufferings, and most of all, our sufferings for his name's sake. The world which hated him hates us, and the principles of the world which are opposed to him, oppose themselves to us. He was a stranger here; and just in proportion as his people are like him they will learn that they too are strangers here. Now, is it not well for us to be in a position where he can have fellowship with us in some things? In this wilderness he comes down to us in our sorrows, and has fellowship with us in our sufferings; it was in this wilderness he sorrowed and wept, and deeply and tenderly he sympathizes with

his tempted members ; nay, " If ye suffer for C
sake, happy are ye ; for the spirit of glory and o
resteth on you." 1 Pet. iv. 14.

5. We are left here to learn *the power of God*—it were not for the mighty power of God, the world, the flesh, and the devil would be too much for us ; we are all leagued against our souls ; it is the power of God alone that keeps us ; it is not by might of our own, or power or wisdom of our own, but by the arm of our God round about us that we are kept ; we are left in the world, to learn the lesson.

6. We are left here to learn *the faithfulness of God*—I believe there is no more important lesson we can learn in the wilderness than this—the faithfulness of God ; that he is true to his promise, always has been and always will be ; that he does not and will not change though we do ; that he does not vary his love to us, as we do in our love to him ; that he is the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever," our friend, our faithful God.

7. And the last thing I would mention which we are left here to learn is this : to believe his word in all the varieties of our frames—and where can that position be imagined in which such a variety of trials and feelings is brought out as in this weary wilderness where so much disappointment, conflict, and temptation ; where so many deep, deep afflictions ?—in all the varieties of our frames, and in all the phases of our need, we are here to learn to believe his word notwithstanding ; to hope in his name, to watch, to pray, to wrestle, to contend, and, by his grace, to conquer through him that loveth us.

Oh! our God and Father, teach us our wilderness
 lessons, grant that we may learn them well, grant that
 we may learn them deeply; let us not lose one stage
 of our pilgrimage: let us not lose one practical lesson
 of any of the conflicts, difficulties, and trials of our
 journey were intended to impart; only keep us in the
 power of thy hand, keep us from evil! Soon the
 wilderness will be past for ever, and *then* the white robe,
 and *then* the palm branches of victory, and *then* the
 crown of life, and *then* the throne of glory. Now, dear
 Father, let us try and feed our faith, if we have any;
 if we have not, may God Almighty *beget* faith in
 us while we ponder over the Lord's words.

"Holy Father, keep them." He was looking at the
 world in which he was leaving them, thinking of its
 temptations, its dangers, and sorrows. He knew he was
 going away from it. "Holy Father, keep through
 out my name those whom thou hast given me, that
 they may be one, as we are." I am leaving them,
 leaving them in the world; I have no more to ask
 of myself, Father, I am going to thee; now all my
 heart is with them, all my anxiety is about them,
 my thought, my whole prayer is for them. "Holy
 Father, keep them." Observe, too, the position in
 which he would have them kept, in *union with himself*,
 that they may be one, as we are."

"Holy Father." We should have probably said,
 Merciful Father, keep them, or Gracious Father,
 keep them, or Loving Father, keep them. No; Christ
 fixes upon his holiness, and in verse 25, on his
 righteousness, pleading also

the relationship God sustained to him who was praying with him, and to them whom he represented, therefore he says, "*Holy Father*, keep them." Now does he fix upon this attribute—the holiness of God. It is the crown of all God's attributes; it is the beauty and the perfection which sets off the rest. When God would swear, we read, because "he swears by no greater, he swears by himself." Why does he select this one attribute to swear by, as representing all the others. You remember Ps. lxxxix. to no doubt, Christ alludes, "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." Now, the true David pleads, "*Holy Father*." In pleading his holiness, God pledged that which is the crown of all his attributes—that which represents all. The holiness of the Godhead is *holiness*, and that is pledged to David, and Christ claims the pledge.

Again, Christ had *finished* the work which the Father gave him to do; and, therefore, he pleads the holiness of God to keep his people. He is not pleading that which he had no right to claim; according to the Father's holiness, he pleads the *righteousness* of God, for it is as right a thing with God to keep his people, as it is to record tribulation to them that trouble them. It was in order that they might be kept, Jesus left his throne, and laid his nature upon him; in order that they might be kept, he was about to die for them; and all this in the covenant arrangement with his Father. He now pleads the pledged oath, the holiness of his Father, and the fulfilment of his promise that he should see the salvation of his soul.

There is another reason why he pleads the holiness of God; remember the place he was leaving them in; remember the nature they possessed: he was leaving them in an unholy world, he was leaving them with an unholy nature in that world. Oh! there is a close connection between the holiness of God unto which he commits them, and the purpose in his heart for them that they might be kept in the unholy world, and in spite of the unholy nature in which they were to tread that world's darkness way. "Keep them," keep their *lives*, keep their *faith* from dying out, keep their *hope*, let it never be extinguished, keep their *comforts*, keep their *souls*, keep them in their going out, and in their coming in. "O my Father, keep them through thine own name." It will refresh the spirit to think of these things.

Remember how often in Old Testament times the Spirit of God was pleased to illustrate what a "Keeper" God is to his people. You have in Ezek. xxxiv. Jehovah, the Shepherd, keeping his helpless, diseased, threatened and trembling flock. See verses 11-16, "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; and I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel

shall their fold be ; there shall they lie in a good pasture and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick."

Again, you have in Isa. xxvii. 2, 3, Jehovah a *keeper*; in another figure as a *husbandman* keeping a vineyard: "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard that bringeth forth red wine;"—a costly vineyard and precious,—"The Lord do keep it!—you see there is no other keeper but the Lord—this—"I will water it *every moment*: lest any hurt will keep it *night and day*." Our blessed meek Jesus knew who he was speaking to when he said, "Father, keep them;" he would have them kept every moment, watered every moment, kept day and night. Then you have in Ps. cxxi. 3, 4, another figure, a *watchman*, Jehovah a watchman, keeping his people,—that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. "The Lord is thy keeper." Oh! to realize that we have a keeper; what a need of being kept when no one could keep us, what dangers from within what dangers from without; not all the convoy of angels from heaven could keep us, Jehovah is thy keeper. In Ps. xv. we have other figures; there the Lord Jehovah is represented as a rock and a fortress: yea, the munition of rocks, a deliverer, a buckler, a horn of salvation, a high tower. But all these illustrations of God's power to keep his people are included and *surpassed* in

of our blessed Lord. He actually enshrines us in the Deity itself. "Holy Father, keep through thine name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

Observe, he pleads for five things:—

That they should be kept in the holiness of God.

That they should be kept in the fatherhood of

That they should be kept through the name, that holy, holy name, that ineffable name. Keep them *by* thy name, in the knowledge of it, in the love of it, in the enjoyment of it, in the experience of it, in the power keep them *by* thy name. I have no doubt that the meaning of the Lord's prayer here embraces the gift of the Holy Ghost, who was to come personally to them when he left the world. Again, keep them *for* thy name; keep them for the praise of the glory of thy name; keep them to shew that thou *canst* keep them in the most unfavourable circumstances, and against all conceivable foes. Let thy name, my Father, be as a mark for them, against the world, the flesh, and the

"Keep those whom thou hast given me," for they are *thine own, Father*, thy name is upon them, thine mercies are with them, thy glory surrounds them, and they are left here in the world to prove thy power to preserve them: for thine own sake, Father, for they are *mine own*, keep them.

Then, lastly, he pleads, keep those whom thou hast given me, for they are *mine own portion*; if they are lost my portion is gone; if they are lost the travail

of my soul is for nothing ; if they are lost devils mock ; if they are lost the world may triumph ; it be a proved matter that the world, the flesh, and devil are stronger than thou art ; thou gavest them me to be saved, I died for them, " Holy Father, through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

Observe, he asks that all those for whom he pleads may be "*one, as we are,*" because he knew, and the Father knew, and he would have us know that the safety of the church consists in union with himself. Adam was not in union and he fell, angels which kept not their first estate were not in union and they fell ; there can no fall for those who are in union with the living God. This is the ground upon which the loving heart of our mediator pleads for his people that they may be one. We have, here, an illustration that no mind of man can fully enter into, we find our Lord frequently teaching about union, comparing the union between himself and his people to the union between the branches and the vine, and between the members of the body and the head ; but here all illustrations are thrown aside, and the union on which hangs the universe, and in which the Deity itself rests is pleaded, "that they may be one, as we are." And he explains afterwards why and how they may be, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

This prayer has been *heard*. How safe, then, may be those who have come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and have taken him for their portion and their Saviour. The answer to the prayer of Christ is written in 1

where the Spirit of God by the Apostle describes the people of God, as in the wilderness, and though now for a season, if need be, in heaviness through manifold temptation, yet "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." For Christ prayed, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me."

Here, then, we have our Lord committing those who believed upon him, and those who would believe upon him through the teaching of his Apostles to the *Fatherhood* of God, to the *holiness* of God, to the *name* of God, to God's own *property*, and as Christ's own *portion*, as given to him by his Father to be kept. Now what I need, and what you need, is faith to *draw* upon these things. We listen to them. Oh! for faith to *live* upon them, to *act* upon them, to imbibe the love, the power, and the life that they contain, and to go upon our way singing, as Israel of old was taught to sing, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the Lord of thy excellency! and thy enemies shall be found vain unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

17

*"While I was with them in the world, I kept them
thy name."*—JOHN xvii. 12.

OUR Lord, as we have before said, is in this prayer committing his people to his Father's care. He pleads "they are thine," and "they are mine." As the High Priest appeared before God on the day of atonement with all the names of the tribes on his shoulders and his heart, so Christ here presents himself before his Father. It is the voice of "the only begotten Son of God" that speaks, it is the voice of the Lamb of God even now on his way to the altar of sacrifice, and thus prays, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name:" or perhaps more literally, "Father, keep them in thine own name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me. They are wonderful workers, they breathe nothing but love, and grace, and truth, and tenderness. He brings no charge against them, he finds no fault with them, he hints at no deficiency: yet we know they had many faults, many deficiencies, the disciples were not angels, but men. Hitherto they had not been great saints, but on the contrary were feeble ones, not persons of high attainments, but "simple of heart to believe," and ready to halt; not very eminent for any grace, and at times full of failure and of corruption.

the Lord takes no notice of this in all his prayer. Brethren, our Lord Jesus Christ is a great Saviour, and a divine mediator; he is full of grace and truth and love; he is exactly suited to the need of his poor people, whether as regards their sins, their corruptions, their infirmities, or their temptations; and the whole of his dealings with them have been, are, and ever will be one grand display of abundant mercy; this prayer, expressing his thoughts, revealing his purposes, uttering his will, and his anxieties concerning them, are sufficient evidence of his love.

“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in my name.” He was with them in the world; “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” “Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” He would not only save us with an high hand, but he would *know* our sorrows, he would *experience* our trials, he would be *tempted* as we are, and, like his brethren, he would “learn obedience by the things which he suffered;” he was with them in the world, not only in their company, but in their *nature*. Every stage of our wilderness-journey has been trodden by the Lord Jesus Christ himself; in childhood, in boyhood, in manhood, he was with us, “in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness;” and as he had his nativity with us, so he was about to make his grave with us. “I was with them in the world.” Were they in trouble,—so was he. Were they offended,—so was he. Were they in danger?—so was he. Were they neglected,—so was

he. Were they hated by the world,—“if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” “I was with them in the world.” However true it may be that his great aim and object in descending from heaven into our nature and dwelling upon the earth was to die, that “through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil,” it is also true that for thirty-three years he was with us in the world and he knows, as only he can know, our difficulties, our dangers, our infirmities, and our foes. He was compassed with them all his life, and he “can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” He is now far removed from trial, from conflict and from pain, but “we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” He was with us in the world.

You observe he speaks in the past tense, “I *was* with them.” He was about to leave them now, but suggests it as an argument and reason why the Father’s special care and keeping should be with them, “I was with them in the world,” and while I was with them, I kept them in thy name.” Probably the true reading is, “I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me.” If we take the sentence as it is in our Bibles, “I kept them in thy name,” then he means that he did so by the Father’s appointment and authority. He was God’s chosen shepherd, and he kept those given to him in the Father’s name. But taking it in the other reading, “I kept them in thy name, which thou hast given me,” then he means that by his counsel, his teaching, his examination and his constant care, he kept them in the fulness of

ness, the privileges, and the salvation which that name implies and involves.

Our Lord here fully declares and acknowledges before his Father, in the hearing of his disciples, and for our instruction and comfort, *seven* all-important facts.

1. He was commissioned by his Father to be their keeper; he was not here on his own account, he was sent from heaven to keep in the name of God the people given to him; therefore in keeping us he only fulfils his commission, in keeping us to the end he only discharges the obligation and responsibility, which the office he had undertaken involves, the duty which, as mediator, he bound himself to render to the Father that sent him. What a great truth this is! You may depend upon it he will fulfil his office well, and here he gives an account like to that he will render at the last day. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name."

2. Taking the second view of the passage, we learn that in himself was contained all the salvation, strength, and supply in which he was commissioned to keep them, "I have kept them in thy name which thou hast given me." "It pleased the Father that in him should the fulness dwell," and his commission here was to keep the people of God in the enjoyment, the possession, and the fruition of the fulness laid up in himself for their supply: not even the commissioned mediator can do more than keep his people in the fulness laid up in himself for their supply.

3. The third fact brought out here is, how unspeak-

ably precious to God his poor people must be. Was the Son of God sent from heaven to keep them, are they not precious? Was the name of Jehovah committed to Christ, and all the fulness of God up in him *for their supply*, and are they not precious? Oh! inestimably precious. Well the Lord Jesus Christ knows it, and well he pleads the fact, "Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me."

4. Then we have a fourth precious fact. Our Lord is here pleading his Father's covenant engagement, "*Holy* Father, keep them." In the previous lecture we saw that the Father had pledged his holiness to do so, and now the pledge is claimed. "I have kept them in thy name as thy commissioned servant; my work is done, and now I pledge thee my holiness." Father, keep them in thy name, while I am away from them. Very beautiful and very wonderful this is!

5. Then there is another all-important truth. There is not safety for us, even though God himself be our keeper, but in that *name*, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," but the name of him whom God has constituted commissioned, and supplied, with all fulness, in order that he might be his salvation to the ends of the earth. There is no *rest* for us but in that name, no *security* for us but in that name, no *salvation* for us but the name. Oh, may his name be precious to us, may we prize it, may we hide in it, and live upon it till we are with him where he is!

6. The sixth fact involved in the Lord's words

had no hope that we could keep ourselves in that name. Ah! he knows our helplessness, and he pleads in his prayer. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name, for they could not keep themselves, and now that it is expedient for me to go away, "Holy Father, keep them."

7. The last thing I would call your attention to seems plainly brought before us—the character of our blessed Lord's constant intercession. As he was here in the days of his flesh, so is he now at the right hand of God, our mediator. And here is the key-note of his intercession: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name." Now, "Holy Father, keep them through thine own name those whom thou hast given me."

The *name* he speaks of was early revealed. In Exod. iii. 13-15, we read, "Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my *name* for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." We have further light thrown upon this *name* in Exod. xxxiv. 5-7. "The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there,

and proclaimed the name of the Lord. . . . The I the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression of sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." The I Jesus had kept his people in that name, he had revealed to them that name, taught them that name, and he would have his Father keep them in that name. it is a precious resting-place for the faith, and the peace and the happiness of the poor sinner's soul. He offered himself to suffer the just for the unjust, because he would not, and could not "clear the guilty," so the Lord Jesus was made "to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." In Num. vi. 23-27, we find the *name* afterwards committed to the High Priest, and disposed of by him as the representative in his official character of the Lord Jesus Christ himself: "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee," there is the Father, "The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee,"—there is the Son,—"the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace;" there is the Holy Ghost. "And they shall *put my name*," not their names, but my name, "upon the children of Israel." The New Testament version of that name is familiar to us in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

When, in Exod. xxiii. 20-22, Jehovah promised

ie and a leader to the people of Israel, thus he
 scribes him, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee,
 eep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place
 h I have prepared: beware of him, and obey his
 , provoke him not; for he will not pardon your
 gressions; for *my name is in him*. But if thou
 indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak;
 I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an
 rsary unto thine adversaries." *There* was the Angel
 e covenant in Old Testament times; *here* is the
 el of the covenant in New Testament times, and
 vah's name is in him. Christ in our nature was
 epository of Jehovah's name—his *saving* name;
 s Christ was the *manifestation* of Jehovah's name.
 e 6, "I have manifested thy name unto the men
 n thou gavest me out of the world." And now he
 the Father, "While I was with them in the world,
 t them in thy name." To declare how he did so
 d be to give an outline of his entire private life
 public ministry. Suffice it to say we invariably
 the Lord Jesus Christ attributing to the Father
 e power he exercised, all the doctrine he taught,
 act that he was sent, and the success of his mission.
 n men wondered at the gracious words he spake,
 words are not mine, but his that sent me," so we
 in verse 8 of this prayer, "I have given unto them
 words which *thou gavest me*." And so of his works:
 e works are not mine, but the Father's which sent
 So of his people, they are not mine, but thine.
 u gavest them to me," therefore they are *mine*.
 uther—loving, gracious, long-suffering; a Shepherd

protecting and about to die for his flock, was the r of God manifested to his people by Christ. And promised them another Comforter who was to c with them, and be in them, abiding for ever, lea them into all truth, and being in them a well of v springing up into everlasting life; yes, a Fathe them, a Saviour with them, a Spirit—an Holy Spi in them, was *the name* in which Christ kept his disc while he was with them in the world, and into w he commanded them to be baptized, and he now p with his Father to keep them in it when he is p from them.

Let me invite your attention finally to a few of precious things contained in these words.

Observe the evident *equality* implied by our I words as existing between the Father and his “While I was with them in the world, *I kept them* in name.” “Now I am no more in the world Father, *keep them* in thy name.” He compares power and success in keeping them to the Father’s power and ability to keep them. This would be folly if there were not equality between the Father and the Son.

Again, the words suggest to us the preciousness of the name in which we are kept, and where alone we are safe. Oh! prize it beyond all things else, “Beware of any man spoil you,” as the Apostle says, “thrust out of philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” In “him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him.” Oh! dwell in him,

m, hold fast by him, lay hold upon the promise that is able to keep you in him, and that the Holy Spirit has come down from heaven for this end. See John ii. 27, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you: and ye need not that any man testify of you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath testified of you, *ye shall abide in him.*"

Another important and very instructive lesson here regards *the means* whereby we are kept in the name. There is a God of means, and the Lord tells us in verse 8 *he* kept them in the name. "I have given *unto thee the words* which thou gavest me, and they have received them." It is by the word of God that we are kept in the fulness of the name; it is by the word of God that we are *invited* to abide in the name; it is by the word of God that we are *introduced* into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's name of salvation amongst us; it is by the Holy Ghost that we are taught and kept in the name. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, the deep things of God." Ah! brethren, let the word of God dwell richly in you, and never attempt to do anything without asking for the Holy Ghost to teach you; remember "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

Again, let us carefully observe the instruction we here receive as to the nature of this keeping. I call your attention to the subject, because we often make great mistakes about it, and go heavily on our pilgrim way,

because of our ignorance as to the sort of keeping the Lord speaks of. We complain when we feel corruption warring in our members, when our spirits are dark, our hearts are troubled; we complain when we find ourselves compassed with difficulties, oppressed with cares, involved in conflicts temporal and spiritual, when tears are forced from our eyes, and oftentimes weep from our very hearts, and we say, can it be that we are not kept? Are we in the care and keeping of that Father to whom Christ committed his people? If indeed we are in our Keeper, could it be possible we should be tried, troubled, and tossed and worried, and in agony of mind and of spirit so frequently and so painfully as we are? Well I suppose, it will be admitted that when our Lord Jesus Christ said, "I kept them in thy name," he meant *well*, and yet mark the history of the disciples. They were not kept from infirmities—they were full of infirmities; they were even not kept from *sin*, they were certainly not kept from doubts and from unbelief, the Lord often charged them with *both*. They were not kept from failures—oh! how sadly they failed; think of Peter. They were not kept from "the same afflictions which are accomplished in the brethren." He was not one whit less than the chief of the Apostles, "we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being laden with grief; we complain that they were often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Beloved brethren, when our blessed Christ kept his disciples in his Father's name, he kept them in such a way as to humble them to the earth while he greatly exalted his own grace towards

There is an infinite variety and fulness of grace laid up in the name of the Lord Jesus for the supply of his people's almost infinite necessities, and it is for the glory of God that his children should enter into all the departments of that supply. God's glory requires that there should not be any fulness in Christ, which they shall not see and know and enjoy. The grace is in him, "My grace." And the need is in us that it may be manifested. Are our necessities almost infinite? He can sustain us amid all the possible phases of our life's troubled history, making his strength perfect in our weakness, and demonstrating that his grace is sufficient for us. He kept Jacob in all his wanderings, and fed him all his life long, even when he said "All these things are against me;" he kept the king of Babylon, but it was by keeping him from the haunts of man, sending him to dwell in his dwelling with the beasts, that he might learn of the heavens did rule;" he put Daniel into the lions' den, and kept him *there*; he put Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the burning fiery furnace, and kept them *there*; when the great Apostle of the Gentiles had been carried up to the third heavens, and said things which it was not lawful for him to utter, and there was a danger of his being "exalted above measure," God sent a messenger of Satan to buffet him, and kept him *there*, making him say, "most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Peter was an ardent, generous, self-confident character; the Lord permitted him to fall terribly, and kept him notwithstanding, for he had prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and

when thou art converted, strengthen my brethren." friends, the way our precious Saviour keeps his people "in the name," the way the Holy Ghost keeps his people "in the name," and the way in which the Holy Father keeps his people "in the name," is by allowing them to learn in their own experience all the varieties of need, and manifesting to them that there is not a corner or a phase of a need, for which there is not abundant supply "in the name." Thus they are kept in such a way as that they are humbled in themselves, while they are glorified; they are kept in such a way as that all the praise is given to Christ, and no praise is given to them. It is a very trying, but it is the way the Son of God kept his disciples, and it is the way the heavenly Father keeps us.

We are often very much distressed by supposing, and doubtless correctly—that there is something peculiar in ourselves, something which we think contrary to and inconsistent with the possibility of our being Christians; we imagine, if our trials were anything less than what they are, if our temptations were of any other sort than the peculiar kind we suffer from, we might possibly be Christians, but the consciousness of having an infirmity which we are not aware that any one else ever suffered from, knowing that we are assailed, and sometimes fall before temptations which we never hear of or read of in the experience of any other Christian, we stagger in unbelief, we write bitter things against ourselves, we go heavily, and perhaps let go "the name" at least we are sorely tempted to do so. Now, there is not a single sample of fallen humanity, there is not a single phase of human infirmity, there is not a conceivable

ration of human character or of human ruin, that is not a remedy for in the Lord Jesus Christ; and *is to be proved* and manifested to the glory of Christ, to the glory of the Father. Suppose I *am* a unit in the church of God, suppose I *have* a constitution like the other, suppose the history of my experience *is* un- that of any other Christian, suppose my temptation is peculiar, my trial unparalleled in the history of the church of God, *there must be a case just like mine* in order to make it manifest to the glory of God, that there is provision in Christ's fulness for such a case as mine, and I might as well be that individual as another; would it be better that I should change with you, or that you should change with me? What I want to learn is that there is in the name of my Christ that which meets *my* need, that there is in "the fountain open for sin and un- righteousness" that which can wash away *my* guilt, and my need will not be less loud when the chorus of redeemed sinners sing his praises, because my need was the greatest.

Alas! there is very little joy and liberty and love amongst us Christians, I do not speak of professors, I speak of *real* Christians; very little as compared with what might be, and with what *ought* to be. What is the reason? We do not "keep his *word*," we do not make ourselves acquainted with "his *name*," we do not "abide in him," if we did so we should have much more happiness, much more triumph, much more joy, much more *gloriousness*.

The words of our blessed Christ do not imply that he was about to cease to care for and to watch over his

people now that he was leaving them. He himself ere he parted from them, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world;" and when he promised the Holy Ghost, it was not merely as a Comforter—a substitute for himself, but *another* Comforter, something additional to that which they had before. He is still the Shepherd of the sheep, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am* I in the midst of them." But the fact is, his mission on earth was to be in himself the link uniting the whole Godhead to us for our safety and security. His human nature the bond joining Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to the church. It is "a threefold cord, hard to be broken. The *Father* to keep us, a *Christ* to keep us, and an indwelling *Holy Ghost* to keep us; he had done *his* work; and he pledges the Father to do *his* work; and we know that the Father did it, he sent the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost to be in us, and never to leave us till he brings us up to the height, from which as the river of life he descended, to fructify the wilderness and to gladden our hearts.

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in my name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that scripture might be fulfilled."—JOHN xvii. 12.

I WILL read the passage in what is probably the correct version—"While I was with them I kept t

thy name which thou hast given me, and guarded
 them, and not one of them perished, but the son of
 perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Our
 Lord is committing his people to his Father's

charge. He is giving an account of his own faithful discharge of the trust committed to him by his Father, "while I was with them in the world, *I kept them*;" and in an account he will give in the last great day when he is the King, and the Shepherd of his people, he shall give a true and faithful account of all those committed to his trust. Remember a passage or two on the subject. Ezek. xx. 37, Jehovah promises, "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant," "*a delivering covenant*," as it is in the margin; there the rod is the shepherd's rod, the rod of which David said that it comforted him. Again, in Jer. xxvii. 32, they pass under the rod for *marking*, "whosoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be given unto the Lord." And then in Jer. xxxiii. 13, we read, "the flocks shall pass again under the hands of the shepherd that telleth them, saith the Lord." There they pass under the rod for *numbering*, and the whole tale is faithfully brought forth and presented to the Lord "without tear or wrinkle, or any such thing;" by him who, as the Shepherd King, was entrusted with the charge of them.

You observe that in our text the Lord is not only giving a general, but a *particular* account of those committed to him, "not one of them is lost."

There are three things implied here concerning the Lord's people.

I. Their character and condition.

II. Their inestimable value in the sight of God.

III. Their security in the care of our Shepherd evermore.

I. "I kept them." They had need of being kept. Oh, what need, what need! The Apostles were men like passions with ourselves, they had the same dangers we have, and we have the same need of being kept as they had. The weakest thing on earth is a child of God. Look at him in whatever light you will, no language can express the need which exists for his being kept. Scripture speaks of us as lambs in the midst of wolves, accounted as sheep for the slaughter; as exposed to storms, and tempests, and frosts—as "bruised reeds and a shadow that declineth;" as exhibiting the helplessness of infancy, the silliness of doves; these and many more such expressions are used by the Spirit of God to teach us our need of being kept. Moreover, we are *in the world*, the most ungenial place for God's children, where we are exposed to corruption from within and from without, to snares besetting us every side, to devils surrounding us, and watching like roaring lions seeking how and where, and when they may devour us. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spirits of wickedness in high places." What need of being kept! Our path is a dreary and a difficult one; the Scripture speaks of it as sometimes being "through the water" at other times "through the floods," again in the "fir deep valleys to descend into, rugged heights to ascend

There is danger every moment. What need of
being kept!

"I kept them," all their own wisdom collectively and
individually could not keep them for one moment; all
their own watchfulness, all their gathered experience
during the many months and years of their fellowship
with Christ, could not keep them in one single difficulty;
their resolutions could not keep them for one hour;
their gifts—and many of them had great gifts—could
not keep them in one solitary temptation; all their
strengths, all their zeal, all their love, and the frequent
warnings with which they had been warned, the example
set before them utterly failed, and must fail, to keep
them in one single difficulty or for one single moment.
Soon Peter fell when the temptation came; when
it presented itself, *all* forsook him and fled, but "I
kept them in thy name." Carefully he kept them, faith-
fully, prayerfully, constantly, he kept them, and he
has credit from his Father for this. I know not a more
important practical study in the revealed word of God
than this keeping wherewith he kept them, it was of a
nature to humble them to the very dust, while it magnified
the grace of him that kept them. They were not
proud from learning their own emptiness, they were not
proud from proving their own weakness, they were not
proud from grievous failures. He kept them, though in a
deeply humbling to them, yet glorifying to him, and
he keeps his people still. The Lord seems to boast of
his ability to keep his people, he teaches us to say, "The
Lord is thy keeper," and "he is able to keep you from
falling, and to present you faultless before the presence

taken of how precious in the sight of him before whom
 we stand as our High Priest *is each child of God* ; our
 circumstances may be various, our characters and consti-
 tutions may differ, but he loves each soul that trusts him,
 one as much as another ; he has the case of each one
 in his heart, and one as much as another ; his eye watches
 the path of each one that trusts him, and one as much as
 another ; all are collected into the heart of Christ, all are
 individualized *there*. " I kept them ; " oftentimes by reason
 of the peculiarity of our circumstances and the nature of
 our temptations perhaps, or of our very constitution, we
 are led to think we stand alone, and that no other in all
 the family is like unto us. Well, brethren, each one has
 his own place in the Lord's heart, and the Lord *thinks*
 of you my brother, my sister, *cares for you, provides for*
 you, *intercedes for you, sprinkles you, represents you* as
 much as if you *were the only one* in the world he had to
 intercede for, atone for, care for. What we need is this
 precious knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, I want to
 realize that my Saviour is to me in the firmament of
 heaven's grace, what the natural sun is to me in the firma-
 ment of his power ; I may have the *whole* of him as if
 there were no other on earth to enjoy him, and yet rob
 my brother by my possessing and enjoying *all my*
Christ.

" I kept them." His love passeth knowledge, he
 rested not in creation until he had made man in his own
 image ; and when man fell, he rested not in his redeem-
 ing love till he came down from heaven in man's nature
 to restore him again to that image he had lost. And
 even when he went up to the throne, he rests not until in

the marvellous abundance of his grace he fills us with Holy Ghost; and he rests not in the glory until he say, Come and sit with me in my throne, "even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in throne."

3. The third thing implied here is their security. I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me. I kept them by thine appointment, I kept them at thy charge, I possessed them, I surrounded them with all the fullness contained in thy holy, holy, holy name. Brethren, nothing less than this is our gospel. The Shepherd who keeps the sheep keeps his people in the eternal *power* of God, in the eternal *wisdom* of God, compassed in the eternal *faithfulness* of God, enshrined in the eternal *love* of God, quickened with the eternal *life* of God, possessed with the eternal *grace* of God, and to be crowned with the eternal *glory* of God. Is it any wonder we should read "Keep you by the power of God through faith unto salvation?" Is it any wonder we are taught to ascribe praise to him who is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy?"

But observe, he not only gives a general, but a *particular* account; none of them perished, none of them is lost. What a blessed emphasis, *not one of them*. Brethren, we must take strong ground here. We read John vi. 39, "This is the Father's *will* which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing;"—*nothing*—not even their dust, much less their souls, nothing, "but should raise it up again at the last day." Perhaps it may be said the Apostles were

er order of men than we are. Not so, brethren, (Lord Jesus Christ sought, and found them, for they e lost, he quickened them, for they were dead, and he e: them; everything but God was against them; the d against them, the flesh against them, the devil gntst them, everything against them but God, and ything is against us but God. When shall we learn o view God in this light? If we did—if we learned to w God thus, nothing would keep us from him. We ae too much the habit of looking at God as if he were gntst us: we go here and there for some motive or e: on to induce God to be for us. Everything is against s *ut* God, and God is not against us, *but for us*. And list in our nature is a pledge of it, the Holy Ghost in a church is a pledge of it, the book of God is a pledge f. Think of the variety of the characters, constitu- ics, temptations, and difficulties of God's children, and o not one of them lost. Oh! the sufficiency of Christ, h fulness of the fountain open for sin, the glorious igteousness to cover, the strength of the Lord to keep —I kept them.”

Then follows a very solemn and awful word, “the o of perdition is lost, that the scripture might be ful- d.” There is something unutterably mysterious t but the person and character of Judas Iscariot. Ob- e the Lord says he was,—“the son of perdition.” If o look at 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, you have the only other lce in the New Testament, indeed in the Bible, where h expression occurs: “Let no man deceive you by ar means: for that day shall not come, except there ce a falling away first, and that man of sin be re-

vealed, *the son of perdition*; who opposeth and exal himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipp so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shev himself that he is God." The Lord himself decl (John vi. 70) that he was "a devil." I have the stron feeling in my own mind that he was, in some sort incarnation of the devil; that just as God was in Ch so Satan was in Judas. But, of course, I only exp an opinion. It is a remarkable fact that the Lord sho call him by the same name that Antichrist is styled and that he should also say of him that he was devil."

Some have been puzzled in reading this verse, it implied that Judas had been given to Christ, and Christ had lost him. Those who are acquainted v the original, and who look closely to it, will see that very opposite is implied. You find the same mode expression in Luke iv. 25-27, "I tell you of a tr many widows were in Israel, in the days of Elias, w the heaven was shut up three years and six mon when great famine was throughout all the land; unto none of them was Elias sent, *save* unto Sarepta city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. A many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus prophet; and none of them was cleansed, *save* Naaman the Syrian." Do you observe—"many wid were in Israel . . . and to none of them was Elias s save to" one who was not in Israel; "and many lep were in Israel . . . and none of them was cleansed sav Naaman," who was not in Israel. The word "*but*" the passage we are considering is not exceptive, it is

position—"those thou hast given me I have kept, and of them is lost but the son of perdition." I think the full meaning is brought out if we supply, but the son of perdition *is lost*, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

There are some very solemn lessons connected with this statement concerning Judas Iscariot. He never fell by grace, for he never had it; he was "the son of perdition," he was "a thief," he was "a devil," and the Scripture was fulfilled in his fall, for long ago it had been foretold. And in John xiii. 18, the Lord himself alludes to the fact, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." He *did* fall from an exalted office. We read (Acts i. 25) that he had part in the Apostleship, a successor was appointed to take "part in this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell." Judas had a high and an exalted office in the church of God. Oh! let us remember that it is no thing to have an office in the church, and quite another thing to be saved. Judas had unspeakable privileges; for years he had been the constant companion of Christ, he had seen him, handled him, he had been taught from his own lips, yet he was not saved. I have heard people rash enough to say that if the church of Jerusalem did its duty, the whole world would be brought to the knowledge of Christ. Brethren, it is not so; did not Christ do his duty? Will any one say that Christ was not a faithful minister? and yet one of his twelve apostles was lost. Judas had great gifts, for it is very

evident the Lord made no exception with reference to him when he sent them forth "to heal the sick, to cast out devils, and to preach the kingdom," and if there had been any difference with regard to Judas Iscariot, would the Lord said at supper, "One of you shall betray me," and suspicion would at once have fallen upon him, but no disciple said: "Lord, is it I?" No one thought of suspecting Judas, which would not have been the case if the Lord had made any difference in his dealings personally or relatively between Judas Iscariot and the other disciples, as to his offices, privileges, or gifts. *here*, then, is a most solemn fact; we might have the highest office possible in the church of God, and be lost; we may sit under the most privileged ministry, and be lost; we may see what patriarchs and prophets desired to see and never saw; we may hear what patriarchs and righteous men desired to hear and never heard, and be utterly lost. I have heard it said that if only a minister be properly ordained his flock are bound to hear him. There is no difficulty in tracing "the apostolic succession" *here*, and yet "one of you is a devil." My friend, we may have all the externals of religion, we might receive the bread and wine from Christ's own hands, we might have our arms round his neck and our lips to his cheek, as Judas had, and yet be lost. Oh! will we learn not to rest in external things, in form or in outward privileges, when shall we learn not to rest in offices. Believe me, there is no resting-place but in Christ, there is no hiding-place but in him, and no place to wash our sins and pollutions away but in his precious blood.

at a question suggests itself, and a most interesting
 is—Why was there a Judas amongst the twelve?
 may be this: our dear Lord, when he came to
 world, came to be tried, came to taste the sorrows
 the difficulties of his people, so that he might know
 all; and there is not a greater trial, not a greater
 erty, not a greater sorrow for a tender heart than
 dness and ingratitude. Here was one bound up
 family circle, the constant companion of Christ,
 ced to the closest fellowship, and yet a traitor to
 heart, watching him with malice, and betraying
 or thirty pieces of silver. What a trial to Christ!
 ve it was one of the bitterest of the sorrows which
 ted here! Again, it may be this. Here was a
 in the camp, a spy upon Christ, and if he had dis-
 d a fault in thought, or word, or deed, he would
 been ready to tell it, ready to expose and ex-
 te it, but it is something glorious to hear this
 forced to confess: “I have sinned, in that I have
 ed the innocent blood.”
 d why does the Lord here dwell upon the fact?
 oes he say “the son of perdition is lost, that the
 re might be fulfilled?” It is a word of comfort
 or hearts who come to Christ. There was a Judas
 e up with the twelve Apostles, his lot was cast in
 them, and he *seemed* to be altogether one of those
 ere committed to Christ, yet he was lost. How it
 crush any poor sinner’s heart if for one moment
 old entertain the thought—“I may be lost though
 y come to Christ and cast myself upon him, and
 g. I plead Christ, with God, though I have no hope

but in him, no rest but in him, perchance I may yet be lost. Now, to silence any such doubt, our Lord declares that Judas was lost that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. He had office with them; but had not their grace, did he ever seek it.

There is not a little difficulty connected with this passage, but there is one matter for all to carry away. May God Almighty impress it upon each of our hearts. Do not rest in a name to live, do not rest satisfied with being employed in the service of God, do not be in the fact that your knowledge is great, that your attainments are many, that your privileges are peculiar. Judas had all these, and more than any of us have, yet he was lost. There is one refuge for the sinner, one hiding-place for the soul, one name, and they that know that name will put their trust in it, "I kept them in the name," and in pleading thus with his Father he tells of the only safe place for you or for me: "the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

20

"And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; the scripture might be fulfilled."—JOHN xvii. 12.

OUR study of the mysterious account of the loss of Judas suggested three lessons.

I. In some sense all men have been given to Christ. Some given to him to be his members, his portion, his bride, his kingdom; others given to be his servants.

remember what he himself taught us in chapter viii. "The servant abideth not in the house for ever: the son abideth ever." Judas was a servant, not an angel, devils, and men are God's servants; earth, heaven, and hell equally at his disposal. A name is given to our blessed Lord "that is above every name: for at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,"—Master, Ruler, King, Sovereign, unto the glory of God the Father." Whether the name be in this world or in the world to come, *his* name is above every name. But "the servant abideth not in the house for ever: the Son abideth ever." Some are given to the Lord Jesus Christ to be adopted into God's family, but in God's name, and of them he can and will say—"Not one of them is lost."

2. A second very solemn lesson may be gathered from this account of the fall of Judas. No gifts, however great they may be, prove that we are saved souls; no office in the church of God, however high that office may be, even though the office be that of *an apostle*, necessarily involves the salvation of the soul; no attainments, however desirable, can save the soul; as the apostle says, I may have all faith, to remove mountains; and I may have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, and yet be nothing: nothing external can procure our salvation, or warrant our being justified in dying, I have mine inheritance where Christ is all and all; nothing, brethren, nothing but a participation in that covenant of grace by which the Father hath given

to the Lord Jesus Christ a people for his name, united to him by faith, "quicken'd" by him, "taught," "kept," "saved" by him, and "presented" as members of his mystical body, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," "before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," secures the salvation of any man.

3. The third lesson is, that when we believe upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when we receive God's great gift, then we *have* the divine testimony and evidence that we have been given to Christ to be saved by him and kept by him; and that he will, in the faithful discharge of his duty, as the Shepherd of the sheep, feed us, and keep us, and bless us; for he himself says in verses 20, 21 of this chapter, "Neither pray I for them alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Now, in the last clause of the verse, we have a further statement, that in the loss of Judas, the Scripture was fulfilled. The particular Scripture to which our Lord alludes, and which was fulfilled in this case, was probably Ps. cix. The Psalm has been called Judas's Psalm, and it is quoted by the Apostle Peter, in reference to the fall of Judas, in Acts i. 20, "It is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take." The Apostle also states (verse 25) that he fell by transgression, "that he might go unto his own place." *His own place!* an awful statement; undoubted

means hell-fire: and in his fall the Scripture was killed.

I wish to dwell upon this last clause of the verse; may God Almighty impress upon my heart and upon yours the truths taught in it. We are living in days when many, and great, and daring attempts are made to disparage God's word; evil days when men attempt to set aside the Scriptures and substitute "profane and idle babblings, and opposition of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith;" proposing to us to accept the fooleries of our own reasonings as the rule for Christian doctrine, life, and character. Doubts are cast upon the inspiration of Scripture; and men profess to decide, by the power they claim to possess, some internal faculty which it is impossible for them to define or others to understand, what is and what is not the word of God, the book we call the Bible; they tell us the Bible is not the word of God, but that it *contains* the word of God, and that it belongs to this discerning power of our minds to determine what is of man and what is of God. How very much in contrast with such theories and reasonings do we find the practice of the Lord Jesus Christ himself; there is nothing of this spirit in the way in which he dealt with the Scriptures and taught the Scriptures; whether in his private life or in his public ministry we search in vain for the least indication of sympathy on his part with this rationalism; on the contrary, if there is one thing more remarkable than another in the recorded life of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is his constant endorsement of Scripture, and the

evident faith he had in Scripture, and the constant use he made of Scripture. If any one who ever lived in this world was qualified to speak without the assistance of the written word of God, on matters pertaining to God and man, that individual was the Lord Jesus Christ: but *where do we ever find him doing so from beginning to the end of his earthly history?* His appeal to the Scriptures in all matters, when reference is made to him as regards any question concerning God or man, his own habit of submission to them, his faith in the promises of the word of God, and his constant assertion of their paramount authority, as his Father's word, his Father's will, his Father's doctrine, must be familiar to every ordinary reader of the New Testament.

Now let us inquire, and a very interesting and profitable study it will be; first, what does the Lord Jesus Christ mean by the term "the Scripture?" Here he says, in speaking to his Father, none of them perceived "but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled." What does he mean by the Scripture? He gave his own definition in Luke xxiv. 44, 45: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in *the law of Moses* and in *the prophets*, and in *the Psalms*, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand *the Scriptures.*" You observe he gives the three-fold division: Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, and then we are told distinctly that they were the Scriptures. In 1 Tim. iii. 15-17, Paul, speaking of his beloved Timothy, says: "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures"

es, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation
 ough faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is
 en by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,
 y reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteous-
 s; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly
 nished unto all good works." The Apostle Peter, in
 first epistle and first chapter, states (verse 25) that
 message—his gospel message—was the word of
 Lord: "The word of the Lord endureth for ever,
 this is the word which by the Gospel is preached
 o you." In his second epistle we have a very
 e remarkable statement. He says (chap. i. 16-21), "we
 e not followed cunningly devised fables, when we
 de known unto you the power and coming of our Lord
 us Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.
 he received from God the Father honour and glory,
 en there came such a voice to him from the excellent
 ry, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well
 ased. And this voice which came from heaven we
 rd, when we were with him in the holy mount."—
 is referring to the transfiguration,—"*We have also
 more sure word of prophecy*"—more sure, more to be
 ed upon than even that vision; we *saw* that, but the
 ed of the prophecy is *more sure*,—"whereunto ye do
 l that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in
 ark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise
 your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of
scripture is of any private interpretation,"—of any
 vate mission,—it is not sent forth at man's suggestion,
 t by God's suggestion,—"*for the prophecy came not
 old time by the will of man; but holy men of God*

spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." When we read the writings of the men of the Old Testament they all assert this. If we take up the writings of Moses we hear him say, "The Lord saith," "Thus saith the Lord." We hear the prophets say, "The word of the Lord by Isaiah," "The word of the Lord came by Jeremiah," "Thus saith the Lord." Not Thus I, but "Thus saith *the Lord*" by me. This is their account of the message which they were privileged to deliver. Hear David: "*The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.*" And here is the passage we have for our text, and in countless others we have Christ quoting the Scriptures, submitting to the Scriptures, and endorsing the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

The fact is, the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ was the spirit of the Old Testament; what the Scriptures foretold, the Lord Jesus Christ in his person, and work made to be *history*. It is very interesting to trace this in the New Testament. His birth for instance (Matt. i. 21-23.) Why is he called Jesus? Why was he born amongst us? We might say, Because God is a God of love, and because Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and would come amongst us to save us. That is true, but it is not the reason the word of God gave. "All this was done, that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." And so the divers incidents in his earthly life. Trace them. See Matt. ii. 14

Joseph and Mary took the young child by night and fled into Egypt. Why?—Because there was danger?—Because Herod would slay the child? That also is true. The reason Scripture gives: he “was there at the death of Herod, that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ‘‘of Egypt have I called my son.’’ The Scripture is to be *fulfilled*; this is our point. Again, see verses 16, 17. Herod went forth and slew the babes at Bethlehem. Why did he do that? Because he was cruel? Because he wanted to slay the Lord Jesus Christ? But that is not the reason Scripture gives: “‘Then, *fulfilled* that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, ‘‘In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.’’ Again, verse 23: ‘‘He came and dwelt in the city called Nazareth.’’ Why did he dwell there? No doubt Joseph had his reasons for dwelling there, no doubt Mary had her reasons for dwelling there, and circumstances made it necessary that he should dwell there, but that is not the reason Scripture gives: but “‘but that it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called Nazarene.’’ Now see Matt. chap. viii. 16, 17. Here we have an account of the *divers miracles* wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ. ‘‘They brought unto him many which were possessed with devils: and he cast out the devils with his word, and healed all that were sick. Why did he do so? Was it because he was gracious? Because he came to seek and save the lost?’’

Yes. But that is not the reason Scripture gives: "That it might be *fulfilled* which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

Observe his *use of the Scriptures*. When (Matt. 4) after his baptism, he was "led up of the spirit into wilderness to be tempted of the devil," he draws from all his weapons from the word of God; he does not attempt to deal with Satan on any other ground than as a man of faith dealing with God's truth; thus with the "sword of the spirit which is the word of God" he defended himself against the assaults of Satan, and overcame him. When the Sadducees come to him with their questions, endeavouring to disparage the truth of the resurrection, how did the Lord answer them? He refers them to *the Scriptures*; and when you go to that place, you find it is in the book of Exodus, where he is speaking to Moses at the bush. The Lord quotes the book of Exodus as "*spoken by God*," although people living in our day would tell you it is all old world fables. Observe, he does not give his own opinion; he quotes the Scriptures in refuting the error of the Sadducees. When divers charges were brought against him for inconsistency, because he had healed the blind and allowed his disciples to do what the elders considered to be breaking the law of the Sabbath on Sabbath-day, how did he answer them? Not by reasonings of his own, but by referring to *the Scriptures*. When he prepares for the trial—the awful trial hanging from him, he goes to the Scriptures. See Luke xviii. "Then he took unto him the twelve, and said

n, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." Well he knew that awaited him at Jerusalem, it was the baptism concerning which his soul was straitened till it should be accomplished, and he needed comfort and strength, he needed the sustaining of his Father in that ordeal; and where does he find it? In his Father's word: for he says, "and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be *accomplished*." And in his deep sorrow where does he go for comfort? See Mark xiv. 26, 27: "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night." Oh! it was crushing his heart to think of it; where did he find his consolation? In *the Scripture*, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

Again, mark our Lord's deep reverence for the Scripture at all times,—when he was undergoing the sentence of death for our sin (John xix. 28), just before he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, we read—"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*, said, I thirst." Even on the cross he was thinking of what the Scripture had declared concerning him, and while the bitterness of death was upon his soul, and the prospect of coming to glory was before his gaze, his thoughts were upon the fulfilment of Scripture; and remembering there was a prediction concerning him so far unfulfilled, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," "*that the Scriptures might be fulfilled*, he said, I thirst." Well, he rose from the dead, did that alter his view of the importance

of the Scriptures, or his estimation of them? See I xxiv. 25, 27. He is speaking to the disciples with whom he had been going on the way to Emmaus: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all *Scriptures* the things concerning himself." How would I like to have a copy of that discourse, a record of that exposition of the Scriptures! The Spirit has been pleased to give it to us, because doubtless all that is contained is to be found elsewhere scattered through the teaching which the Holy Ghost came down from heaven to impart. Again (verses 44, 45), "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that *all things must be fulfilled*, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand *the Scriptures*." Even after his resurrection, and since he has ascended up into glory, his testimony for the Scriptures is the same. Turn to Revelation xxii. 18, 19, "I testify."—Who is speaking? See verse 16, "*I, Jesus*," it is the same speaker all through to the end, "*I, Jesus*," the exalted one, the girded Priest, waiting in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, "*I, Jesus*, hairs white like wool," (the vision of whom, we have through the Book of the Revelation as King of kings and Lord of lords)—"*I, Jesus*, have sent mine angels to testify," "*I testify* unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him

es that are written in this book: and if any man take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." We see he is coming again in glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, for God hath "appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." How shall the word of God, *the Scriptures*, stand in that day? Turn to John xii. 48, "The word which I have spoken, *the same shall judge you in the last day.*" This is a most important and very interesting line of thought; it should establish the importance and value of the Scriptures in our estimation, to consider how *he* judged them who came *to fulfil them*, and who best understood their worth.

You remember that, ere he left the earth, he promised to send another Comforter. What was to be the great business of that Comforter? "To lead his people into truth," "to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had *said* unto them," to open their understandings that they might understand *the Scriptures* which he, the Holy Ghost himself, had indited, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he discern them, because they are spiritually discerned." What man knoweth the things of a man, save the things of man which is in him? even so *the things of*

God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. Nor have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." The Apostles, under the influence of that Holy Spirit, wrote the New Testament that is the reason we believe the New Testament to be as inspired as the Old. St. Peter claims inspiration in his record, 1 Pet. i. 25, and he endorses the writings of Paul as *the Scriptures*. 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16: "Account the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also *the Scriptures*, unto their own destruction."

The Scripture must be fulfilled; every prediction faithfully accomplished, every promise carried out to the letter; every warning and every threatening fulfilled according to the faithfulness and the sincerity of the one whose warning, whose threatening, and whose word. What can hinder? Is God not *powerful* enough to keep his word? Is he not *faithful* enough to keep his word? Where shall we go for a single example or instance where he failed to keep his word? Go back to the beginning. In Eden, we have man in the image of God, with God, and like God, and God said, "Very good." A few hours, it may be, certainly not many days afterwards, and see what a wreck in that garden of Eden, what misery where there was all gladness; all darkness where once there was only light, and glory.

! What brought about the great change? You say, sin; well so it was. Man became a rebel; so it was. But the real reason was that God had said, "The man that sinneth, it shall die;" God had said, "Of the day of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." *The Scripture was fulfilled.* When he fell, God gave a gracious promise; he spoke of the seed of Adam, and long ages afterwards that glorious one came. He was born at Bethlehem, "*according to the Scriptures*;" he took upon him our nature, "*according to the Scriptures*;" he lived among us a man of sorrows, "*according to the Scriptures*;" he gave himself for our redemption, "*according to the Scriptures*;" he rose from the dead, "*according to the Scriptures*;" he conquered death and hell. Why did he do it all? You say, the love of God; yes. You say, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; yes. But God had said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," that is the true reason, and *Scripture was fulfilled.*"

Where shall we go to find that God does not keep his word? Shall we go to the deluge? God sent a preacher of righteousness to the antediluvians, who said that within a hundred and twenty years God would bring a deluge upon the earth, if men did not turn from their evil ways. Did God keep his word? The deluge was the answer. Shall we go to the cities of the plain? God sent a preacher there, too; would that he had been more faithful! But this was the cry heard in Sodom and Gomorrah, "Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city." Did God keep his

word? Answer, the descending fires of the Almighty upon the cities of the plain, the moment Lot entered Zoar.

Where shall we find evidence that God does keep his word? Shall we ask of Babylon, that prince of kingdoms, the golden city, who said, "I shall be a lady for ever." God said, she shall be a wilderness "the owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dwell there," and so it is, *the Scripture is fulfilled*. Where shall we find evidence that God does not keep his word? Look at his dealings with the people of Israel, a people "found in the waste and howling wilderness and brought in and planted in their own land, even in a land that he had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands." Where are they now? Scattered, a by-word and an hissing. Why? Because God had said, if they forsook him, he would scatter them; they did forsake the God of their fathers and they are scattered, a universal testimony throughout the whole earth that *the Scriptures must be fulfilled*.

Where shall we go for evidence that God does keep his word? Shall we ask that "white-robed multitude standing before the throne, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb?" Why are they there? They will answer you with an outburst of Hallelujahs. It is because *the Scriptures must be fulfilled*. We came to him in our misery, we sought him in our ruin, we bathed in the fountain open for sin and for uncleanness, and we are whiter than snow. Shall we ask where "the worm dieth not, and the fire is quenched,"—what evidence is *there* that God doth

his word? The answer would be from amidst wailing and gnashing of teeth, it is written, "the earth shall be turned into hell and all the nations that offend against God," and *the Scriptures are fulfilled*. God will surely carry out every jot and tittle of his word; the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law *till all be fulfilled*." He does not mean the Ten Commandments only, he means the whole word of God, "the law which was in his heart," the will of his Father which he came down from heaven to accomplish, because he delighted to do it. In John x. 35, he tells us *the scripture cannot be broken*." Men venture upon a fearful cast who argue either that God's promises are *too great to be true*, or that God's threatenings are *too dreadful to be inflicted*. The answer to both is to be found in *the Cross of Calvary*; no promise that God could give could surpass the promise there *fulfilled*, and no exhibition of judgment can ever exceed that which was there exhibited, when he who was in the bosom of God, and who *was* God, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

Let infidels scoff, let sceptics object, let worldings neglect the word of God if they will, but God has sanctified his word above all his name!" "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven," and every promise is a warrant for faith, a future for hope, a rest for love, a challenge to the world, the flesh, and the devil; every threatening is a warning from him who would not deceive, and who cannot be deceived, to poor sinners, to sons and daughters of men, to "flee from the

wrath to come," and to hide in the rock that was cle shelter them. *The Scriptures must be fulfilled*; God write them in all our hearts.

31

“*And now come I to thee.*”—JOHN xvii. 13.

WE have had a similar utterance before in verse II. am no more in the world;” “I come to thee.” Hith *I* have taken care of them, hitherto *I* have entered their difficulties, been their companion in their sorrow their fellow-pilgrim through the wilderness. My *I* has been nigh, and ready at all times to wipe away tears, and my heart’s tenderest sympathies, to enter their sorrows; “and now come I to thee.” The *I* thus expresses himself, evidently as an argument to his Father, that the special keeping, the constant holy love of that Father, might surround and ensh them, during the period which it was expedient for t that he should be parted from them. Such uttera might well have demonstrated to his disciples (who listening to him) and to us, how much of his heart was leaving behind, even while he was saying, “I c to thee,”—and that not even in glory could he rest, as he had the assurance and conviction, that the Fatl tenderest care would be with his people, that the se place of the Most High should be their refuge, and t dwelling-place in the shadow of the Almighty.

“And now come I to thee.” Our blessed Lord about to return, ascending up “where he was bef

nearly three-and-thirty years he had been on earth engaged about his Father's business. God had promised before to send him to bruise the serpent's head; the promise had been fulfilled; the Son of God had manifested in the flesh, "that he might destroy the works of the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He had been sent forth empowered, commissioned, and enabled to "spoil principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in himself." He had come into life's wilderness "to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad,"—to bestow "life," their "righteousness," their "sanctification," their "redemption," their "resurrection," their "all in all." He had come "to finish the transgression, and to make an atonement for all ungodliness, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness," and to anoint the temple of the living God. He could say, "I have glorified thee, on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He could say in the hearing of his disciples, and for the comfort of his disciples, and for our comfort, too, "Thou hast given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me" (verse 2).

Now he was returning, his glorious work divinely accomplished: "I come to thee"—the conqueror of death and hell, the crowned Saviour and Captain of the people, and of the hosts of God: as their Fore-runner, he was now to enter heaven in their names, and take possession of their mansions, "the First-fruits of them that slept," "the First-begotten from the dead," "the

First-born among many brethren,"—God's own pointed mediator, commissioned by the Father to transact his affairs with men, and men's affairs with God. He was returning,—the head of grace, and the head of glory; like Joshua returning to Makkedah after the slaughter of the kings, "*and all Israel with him,*" Lord Jesus Christ was returning home to his Father, Leader and Head of his mystical body; every spiritual member of that body—that is to say, every sinner who ever did, or ever will, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, virtually going up with him, mounting the vault of heaven with him, triumphing over death and judgment with him, sitting down at God's right hand in heavenly places with him, and remaining enthroned in the person of their King till the King shall return to take them to himself, "that where he is there they may be also."

Now his work on earth for his people was over every foe that could, by any means, hinder their ultimate rest, and joy, and triumph, and salvation, was utterly laid down. "I have overcome the world." Every difficulty vanquished, every engagement which he had come from heaven to fulfil—so far as earth was concerned fulfilled: The law which man had broken, he had magnified; the justice of God which man as a sinner had challenged, he as the God-man had vindicated; infinite atonement had been made by him for sin; the remainder of his work was to be fulfilled in heaven. "Now come I to thee." The vail that had hitherto separated the sinner from Jehovah was, in his death and resurrection, to be rent from the top to the bottom, and he himself, as our Fore-runner, was the first to enter.

Remember that beautiful record in the Hebrews, "Christ did not enter into the tabernacle made with hands, which is the figure of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us;" . . . neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." The veil that separated the sinner from God was rent in twain, to prove that it was rent in reality, when he died and rose. An high priest, not of the tribe of Levi, or family of Aaron, but "after the order of Melchisedek," was to officiate for us, not in an earthly tabernacle, or before an earthly sanctuary, but in the Heaven of heavens, in the immediate presence of God. This work could not be done on earth,—“if he were on earth he should not be a priest;” there was no temple here worthy of our priest; the throne in the heavens is that in which the Lord Jesus Christ—his people’s High Priest—officiates. “Now come I to thee.” The blood he was bringing in, and where he sprinkles not an earthly mercy-seat, but the very throne of God, was his own blood, that the Holy Ghost might come forth—descending along the path by which he had ascended—consecrated to be our Comforter, in virtue of that atoning blood wherewith our High Priest had “sprinkled heaven itself.” Oh! it was expedient for him to go,—the Comforter could not come else. “Now come I to thee.” The words do press upon our spirit, they contain so much, there is nothing earthly in them, they are altogether heavenly. Perhaps the best way of examining them for a short time is to consider them,

- I. As they refer to himself.
- II. As they refer to his Father.
- III. As they refer to his people.

I. "I come to thee." Marvellous utterance of glory, of triumph, of faith, and of love! Who comes? A man, brethren, but a God-man! There was a time when man in the image of God could come to God, a welcome and accepted worshipper. But sin had made "a gulf" and man could not pass it. But our dear Lord in wondrous and unutterable grace, had passed the barrier sin had made between the sinner and Jehovah, at what a cost to himself! He had to come down from heaven, to assume human nature, and there humbled himself, even to the form of a servant, nay, lower than any servant, till he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and now, with the travail of his soul as the payment made to God's justice, he goes back to God, *not as a private individual*, but as the representative Head of his redeemed family. "I come to thee," "I"—the people's representative, "I"—*the pledge* of thy love to them, *the seal* of thy salvation to them, *the earnest* of glory in them--I "come to thee." I come, not in a matter of mercy, but in the right of my atoning finished work, and on the ground of justice and truth. "I come to thee," to thy very throne, to thy very heart, to thy glory, my Father, and their Father, my God, and thy God. What *words of grace*, what triumph! What joy!

And this was his joy, for he adds, "these things I speak in the world that they"—that is, his people—"might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Our Lord is not speaking in his divine, but in his mediatorial

acter, as the God-man. It was that he might thus be near to God, and claim God, and take possession of God for his church, and as representing it, that he endured the cross, despising the shame." This was the joy set before him," thus to save his people, bring them in himself, as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, nigh to God: and now he is triumphing in its accomplishment,—“I come to thee.” How little he seems to think of all that terrible valley which lay between, and of the principalities and powers of hell which were all confederate to oppose his passage.

He makes nothing of the curse which was to descend upon him when hanging on the cross as the sinner's substitute, till from his crushed soul the cry was wrung, “My God, my God, why hast thou *forsaken* me?” He speaks only of *the glorious issue*, “I come to thee.” How do the children of God shrink from death! See how our Lord contemplated his death, and yet never was there a death as his. No child of God can ever die as he died; his death has taken away the sting of death from all his people. Yet, how brightly he speaks of death—“*I come to thee.*” The glory that was beyond! The rest beyond! the songs beyond! the Father beyond! The light from his eye, and filled his heart, and the light from his glory falling down upon his soul, scattered all the darkness that lay between. Oh, if it did so in *his* case, how much more may it do so in our case! We have not seen the curse he bore, nor writhe under the sting of death, which he endured in our stead.

The words are words of *faith*—“I come to thee.” Collect the circumstances under which he thus confi-

dently anticipated his coming to the Father. "The burden had laid upon him the iniquity of us all," and yet he did not doubt,—no *shadow of doubt* passes over his mind in respect to his welcome. "I come to thee." All the iniquities, all the transgressions, all the sins of omission and commission of all the individuals of the church of God were laid upon him; and the only satisfaction which could be made for them was his own outpoured blood—*his substitutionary life*. He knew the virtue of that blood, he knew the Father's estimation of that blood, and it is written that the Spirit of the living God for our joy of faith, although conscious he was about to bear the whole burden of the church laid upon his own individual soul, yet he was the virtue of the blood he was about to offer upon the cross, and, as our great High Priest, to plead for resurrection within the vail, that he knew it would cancel every debt with which he was charged, and be his own to enter as our representative notwithstanding! How can it be that we can ever doubt the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ, or the efficacy of his precious blood, to deal with our own individual and lesser portion of sin and iniquity? I would not be understood to disparage or make light of the sin and iniquity of any child of God; but what is the amount of any one man's sin as compared to the burden laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ? When he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree, he knew that his blood would meet it, he knew the faithfulness of the Father who had promised to accept his offering, under the imputation of it all, and in the full consciousness of his liability to atone for all, he said, Father, "I come to thee."

They are words of *love*. Deep indeed is the

dictated them. "And now come I to thee." What is he thinking of? Not of himself, but of his people, his heart is full of the salvation he is about to make for them; he is thinking of the crowns that he will give them, he is thinking of the songs they shall sing, he is thinking of the joy unspeakable and full of glory into which he would introduce them. In view of these considerations, he thinks not of the pain, he thinks not of Gethsemane, he thinks not of the dark and terrible valley that lay between him and the glory to which he is going, he only thinks of the comfort and joy of his being there with his people and for his people.

Now consider the words as they refer to his Father. "I come to thee." Oh that we had such views and thoughts of God! Our dear Lord was weary, he was longing for rest, and thus he expresses himself in reference to all his realizations and anticipations of rest, "*I come to thee.*" Jehovah had promised that he should be "at ease of the travail of his soul" and "be satisfied," and he sums up all his expressions, desires, and expectations of satisfaction thus! "Now come I *to thee.*" His people were awaiting him, songs of angels were silent in his ears, the heavenly hosts were ready for their shout of welcome,— "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be open, and the King of glory will come in;" but *not* the starry height, *not* the songs of angels, *not* the throne of glory fills his heart. Father, "come *to thee*"—the crown of all my joys, the rest of my love, the fulness of all my bliss. Would to God we had such views of our Father!

III. Lastly, consider the words as they refer to people. He has gone to God, the heavens have received him, and he is now sitting at the right hand of Majesty on high, in the place of power, and in the prospect of glory. God has glorified him by consecrating him High Priest in heaven, his whole office being to transact sinners' affairs with God—he “can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.” He has learned in his own human experience every variety of human sorrow, every class of human temptation, every variety of human difficulty. With all his experience gathered here amongst us during the life of his flesh, when he went in and out among men, he is now enthroned where no temptations can reach him, and no unkindness assail him, where no tears are shed, where no sighs are heard, and no death can befall him. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, sent forth by him, has taken up his eternal dwelling-place in our hearts, and tells us his message, “Because I live ye shall live also.” —“I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” Oh! let us cast all our care upon him, for he careth for us. Let us tell him our temptations, he is “touching with the feeling of our infirmities;” “for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Let us bring our anxieties to him, let us roll our burdens upon him—he is “bound up with our bone,” though the Lord of glory—he is “flesh of our flesh,” though sitting upon the throne of God, the head of grace, and head of glory. It cost him his life

down and save us, but it costs him nothing to bless
 us—it costs him nothing to open his hand and give
 liberally of the “all fulness” that it pleased the
 Father should dwell in him, that out “of his fulness” we
 receive “grace for grace.” And while we wait for
 his return, let us imitate his confidence. May we not
 say, Father, “I come to thee?” Hath he not pre-
 pared the way, hath he not paid the debt, hath he not
 purchased the kingdom of heaven to all believers? What
 death and judgment, the world, the flesh, and the
 devil are all united to oppose us, they were all
 united to oppose *him*, and he scattered them, and
 he is up more than conqueror over them all. May
 we, seeing we follow him who “spoiled them,”
 should they should not spoil us, also say, we come to thee?
 Rejoice in his triumphs, brethren, for why has he tri-
 umphed? His enemies are our enemies, his victories are
 our victories, and his people overcome “*through the blood
 of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony.*” Let us
 rejoice then in his triumphs, for they are his people’s
 triumphs. He has said, “In the world ye shall have
 tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the
 world.” His triumphs are our triumphs, fear not justice,
 for justice is satisfied; fear not judgment, judgment is on
 our side; fear not God, God is our Father. Oh! plead his
 name! make mention of his righteousness only; there
 is no other righteousness,—God accepts *no other*. He
 has given the Lord Jesus to us to be our title; plead
 his merit; make mention of his name. It is an all-
 prevailing name with the Father; he delights to hear
 it. And as you plead, imitate his confidence, and re-

joy in joy. Come boldly to the throne of glory, draw near to God, and say, my Father, my Father, come to thee."

Oh, it was a glorious sunset! How majestic, how confidently, with what peace and joy and glory doth the day-spring from on high gather around all the trophies which he hath purchased by the blood of his soul, and present them in himself, and with himself, to the Father whose love gave him for us. "I come to thee." May his Spirit teach us to drink these things!

22

"And these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."—JOHN xvii.

IT is impossible fully to realize the love which dictated this prayer, and which is expressed in these words; "love that passeth knowledge;" but, as we listen and get an insight into our dear Saviour's heart, and discover that he would not only have us safe here, "more than conquerors through him that loved us," but also a happy people, that he would have us go on our way through the pilgrimage of life not only secure, but singing; fully realizing that he *is* all, that he has all, and that he has *said* all that is necessary for our comfort as well as our safety, for our joy as well as our salvation.

"These things," he alludes to what he had said, he was saying to his Father in the hearing of his disciples. He had been unfolding secrets which had been hid

himself from the foundation of the world, he had been
 revealing the purposes and thoughts of God towards his
 people in Christ, that they might know them. He had
 been uttering them *in prayer* to his Father that they
 might be assured of them, and of their interest in them.
 Wonderful were the facts he had just enumerated in
 his hearing! *His Father* was their Father. *He* had
 revealed to them his Name! His Father's portion
 and interest in them,—“*they are thine.*” “I am glorified
 in them.” They were his Father's prized and precious
 to himself: “Thou gavest them” to me; and, in order
 that their joy might be full and their salvation secure,
 and their enemies surely conquered, “Thou hast given
 me power over all flesh.” He reminds his Father in
 his hearing, “I have given them the words thou gavest
 me, and they have kept them, they have believed surely
 because thou hast sent me.” The Lord had spoken much
 to his people in his prayer; but all was in praise of
 his Father, everything for them, and in their favour, and
not fighting against them. We can hardly believe our eyes
 as we read and hear him tell the Father, “they have
 kept thy word,” they know that “all things that thou
 hast given me are of thee.” “I pray for them, for they
 are thine.” Surely, he presents them in the perfection of
 his own fulness, in the glory of his own person, in the
 abundance of his own grace!

These things,” (containing and being the expression
 of God's rich purposes of grace and truth and salvation
 towards them, his eternal love for them in the past, in
 the present, and in the future, are uttered, for their
 instruction, for their comfort, for their security, for their

confidence, and for their joy,) "These things," Christ, "I *speak* in the world." This was no silent communion, no whisper in the Father's ear which his people could not hear. It was an open, audible communication that they all might hear it, and, as they heard, be with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." And "these things" were spoken in prayer that they might understand how near to the heart of Christ, and how secure to them, in the Father's love, those petitions—"These things I speak in *the world*"—the world lieth in "wickedness"—the world henceforth to be the scene of their temptations, their conflicts, and sorrows—the world in which he had dwelt with them, the world where he was now about to leave them, the world which he had overcome for them. Thus, in the house of the strong man, the Lord Jesus proclaimed his triumphs, spoiled him of all his armour wherein he trusted, lighting up the kingdom of darkness with the rays of his heavenly love, teaching his pilgrim people how to sing as they pass through it to their heavenly rest.

"These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves." I know not how to open out these words: it is quite overwhelming to read them. That they might have—"joy," joy like they were; that they might have joy, poor, weak, and helpless ones; that sin had marred, that sorrow dimmed, and the fear of death had long held subject to bondage. "That they might have joy,"—what?—"My joy"—heavenly joy this, nothing of earth like his joy like his who came down from heaven—"My

led,"—not merely presented and proposed to them ; to be fulfilled, to be apprehended, realized, and led into ; joy complete, satisfying, sustaining ; joy fed, and "*in themselves*"—not in another but in selves ; joy with which no stranger could inter- le. "The joy of the Lord" is the "strength" of people, and he would have them take their stand on his own joy ! Therefore, he speaks "these things" to the Father, but still to them, *words* ever sufficient to fill us "with all joy and peace in being, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

"My joy." We may regard these words in *three* aspects of view.

"My joy." The *joy* which is mine to bestow ; of which he is the Author and Giver.

"My joy," of which he is *the object, subject, and agent*.

I. "My joy." *His own personal joy*. And, truly, these words comprehend and comprise those *three* aspects of his joy.

First. Let us regard the joy of which he speaks as of which he is the Author and Giver. He came down from heaven to give us joy, "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Thus sang the angel of the Lord at his nativity, "Behold, I bring you tidings of *great joy* which shall be to all people, For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." "My joy,"—joy realized in the soul through the knowledge of that Father, whose love he came to reveal ; the

salvation he came to bestow, the relationships he came to sustain towards us, and the Comforter he sent to dwell in us; the joy resulting from the assurance of acceptance, the consciousness of our justification in all things, the realization of our adoption into God's family, and the fact that "even now, we are the sons of God," and, "if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Abiding joy and peace, security, peace, and rest—rest from all our fears, rest from our foes, rest from all our anticipations of ill, rest from all our sorrows in him—he calls this "My joy," because he purchased it for us, and because it is his to bestow.

Secondly. Consider "My joy" as referring to the joy of which he is the object and subject, as distinguished from all other grounds and sources of joy whatsoever. We are too apt to look for grounds and sources of joy in ourselves. We examine into our attainments, our experiences; or (which is a more *unsuspected* form of self-righteousness) into the graces which God, for Christ's sake, may have bestowed upon us, in order to discover in *them* grounds and occasions for spiritual joy. But there is not—there cannot be—real-abiding, soul-satisfying joy, save in the knowledge and enjoyment of Lord Jesus Christ himself. He must be the foundation and the element of all our heavenly joy. In the fifth chapter of this Gospel and the eleventh verse, we find a similar statement, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that you might be full." He had referred to two matters which might be considered as difficulties, not exceptions. In the twenty-eighth verse of the fourteenth chapter

of leaving them. If he was about to leave them, how then could he love them so? And if anything could cast a doubt upon his love, it would darken joy. "Ye shall not say, 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go to the Father,'" and if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you. His absence was thus declared to be one of the greatest proofs of his love, and reasons for their joy. The other matter alluded to, and which might suggest a doubt as to the constancy of his love, is found in the opening of the fifteenth chapter, where he enjoins fruitfulness upon his people, and the necessity of abiding in him, to this end warning them of the consequences of not abiding in him—injury to themselves and dishonour to him. Now when we begin to realize our constant failure in all these matters, our slothfulness and carelessness in duty, our shameful neglect and forgetfulness as to abiding in him, and how little after all is the amount of our fruitfulness, we may be tempted to question our love to him, and then, in consequence, his love to us. Now, if for any cause whatsoever we doubt his love, then will our joy be diminished, therefore he says, "As the Father hath loved me so I have loved you, continue ye in my love." Whatever be your circumstances, wherever you go, wherever you may be situated; with the same unchanging, full, abiding, and abounding love with which the Father loveth me, so have I loved you. Let nothing tempt you to doubt that love. "Continue ye in my love." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Observe the *character* of his joy, it is full, comp abiding, unchanging joy, for he is the object and subject and the element of it, and the grounds and reasons of it are all in himself. There are two grounds for joy in Christ ; what he has done for us, and what is in *himself*. St. Peter writing on this subject (1 Pet. i. 8), "In whom, though now ye see him not believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full glory." By joy "unspeakable" he does not mean that we cannot tell of, joy we cannot express so far as we may realize it, but that if our tongues were set on fire and we were to begin day and night, and year by year to tell of his worth and the inexhaustible fulness of joy he bestowed upon us in himself and by himself, we could never tell it all, for it is "full of glory." We must be in glory before we can fully apprehend the ground and motives and matters for exceeding joy which the Lord has given us. To begin to rejoice in him, even on earth, is glory begun, is joy unspeakable because it is full of glory.

Thirdly. Consider "My joy" as being *his own*. We constantly find language like this in Scripture. When he speaks of the peace he bestows upon his people it is "*My peace* I give unto you ;" when he speaks of the rest into which he introduces them, it is "*My rest* ;" when he speaks of the strength he imparts to them it is "*My strength* ;" when he speaks of the life he bestows upon them, it is his own, "*I am . . . the Life* ;" when he speaks of the way opened out for them, "*I am the way* ;" when he speaks of the fulness he supplies to them, "*His fulness* ;" and of the grace which supplies it,

My grace." So here, when he speaks of the joy he would have his people possessed of, it is "*My joy.*" What was his joy? *God Himself was his joy.*" If he could say in Ps. xliii., "I will go . . . to God, my exceeding joy" (the gladness of my joy), how much more the Lord Jesus Christ! His God was his joy; God, his own God, was his joy. He only knew him fully and he might rejoice in him. The only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, *alone* knew the Father, so as fully to apprehend how much ground of joy was in him. The doing of that Father's will was his joy; the fulfilling of all that Father's pleasure for the redemption of his people was his joy; the being in himself in all—the being in himself the mediator between God and man—was his joy. The fulness and freeness of his salvation—the fact that all power in heaven and earth was committed to him for men was his joy; the certainty and complacency of his Father's love to him, and to his people, which he knew so well and so deeply was his joy; the gift of his people to him was his joy; the union to himself for their full enjoyment of grace and their full possession of glory hereafter was his joy and he says he will have "*my joy fulfilled in them.*"

There are *three* occasions of joy which the Lord Jesus Christ shares with his people—all of them are emphatically his own joy. The joy of the bridegroom over the bride; "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isa. lxii. 5). The joy of the harvest, "They rejoice before thee according to the joy of the harvest" (Isa. ix. 3), as men rejoice when they gather

in the harvest, so will the joy of Jesus be shared with his people when he reaps the fields of earth, and gathers them into the garner of his Father, and his God, *all His sheaves*. The joy of those who divide the spoil, "As men rejoice when they divide the spoil" (Isa. ix. 3). O! haste this day when our glorious Lord Jesus will gather together his people to partake with him in his joy as the conqueror of death and hell; as the rifler of the tomb; as the overcomer of the world, and of him who is the governor of this world—even the devil; the joy of opening paradise to his blood-bought ones; the joy of presenting them to himself without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; the joy of keeping them in the meantime without falling; the joy of presenting them "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." This was his joy,—and he says, "these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

On three occasions this mode of expression occurs in the gospel: John xv. 11, John xvii. 13—and Matt. xxv. 21, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

If you desire to realize this joy, and to fulfil the Lord's will concerning you, "rejoice always," "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." If you would be "filled with all joy and peace in believing," never seek for the motive or measure of your joy in the amount of your love. Joy in the Lord can never be according to your love, nor indeed according to anything in you. It can never be according to your faith. Many persons make a great mistake; they try to find in their love to Jesus a ground for their joy. Try it the other way; seek for a ground for your joy in his love to you, and say with him

castle in faith, "we have known and believed the love
 and hath to us." Thus your joy will be according to
 your faith in that which he has spoken, for "these things
 speak in the world, that they might have my joy ful-
 filled in themselves." Our Lord has spoken enough to
 give you "joy and peace in believing," and what the
 Lord has *said* in order that we might have joy, God the
 Holy Ghost has *written* with the same object. If you
 refer to 1 John i. 4, you will find it written, "These
 things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."
 And what things? "Truly our fellowship is with the
 Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Ah! it was the
 will of the Lord that he should be the link between his
 Father and his people, that they might have fellowship
 with the Father, and that the Father might have fellow-
 ship with them in him. *That* was his joy—the ground
 of it is himself, and the proclamation of it his Gospel.

Now, I have said enough, brethren, I trust, to prove
 how much more a rejoicing people we might be than we
 are. I have said enough, I trust, to impel us to humble
 our souls before him who came down from heaven to *be*
 our joy, who went back to heaven because he *is* our joy,
 and who sent the Holy Ghost down that we might have
 "the joy of the Holy Ghost" till we are with him, enter-
 ing into his joy. O! may we henceforth in his strength
 resolve to deal more with God's word, to wrap our souls
 in God's promises, to lie down in the green pastures and
 by the still waters, and then joy, and peace, and rest,
 which the world cannot give, and which the world can-
 not take away, will flow deeply into our souls, as we trust
 in him, "who, for the joy that was set before him, endured

the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

 23

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath not received them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—JOHN xvii. 14.

OUR most gracious Lord, being about to leave his people in the world, and to enter into his glory, had prayed, "Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." But in presenting this petition, he does it in such a way as to leave no doubt with *those* in whose hearing he was pleading, that the glory he was about to enter into, would be no glory to him, if his absence was to be any loss to them. Accordingly, we find from the fifth verse to the end of the prayer, all his thoughts, all his words, and all his desires, even in the anticipation of glory, have reference to his people.

These are the three principal desires in the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ expressed to his Father. Verse 11—That his people might be kept in the name of the Holy Father, and by that Father from all evil; Verse 13—That they might have his joy fulfilled in themselves; and, Verse 17—That they might be sanctified through the truth.

In urging these petitions he abundantly proves how very near to his heart they were, and he also evidences

sure will be their fulfilment, for you observe he asks to his Father in the language of *prayer*, of that which he might demand as a right, seeing he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do. He presents to his Father, in prayer, a model of the intercession he is now carrying on for us at the right hand of God: "I have given them thy word." He did not give them the work to do: "I have *finished the work*," but "I have given them *thy word*."

Now that word was to be the means whereby the accomplishment of all the desires he had expressed to his Father for his people were to be effected. Were they kept from evil? The word is the means whereby the Father keeps his people from evil. It is by the word he manifests himself to them; it is by the word he blesses them; it is by the word he warns them; it is by the word he comforts them; and just as that word enters into their hearts, and takes possession of their thoughts, they are kept safely in passing through the wilderness, for the Psalmist says, "By the words of thy law I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." The word is the means for fulfilling the joy of the Lord to his people. The word is the testimony of the love of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost to us; the testimony of the triumphs of the Son of God for us. As his word enters into our hearts, joy enters into our hearts, and his joy in accomplishing the word for us is fulfilled by the reception of the word in us. And the word is also the means for the sanctification of his people: "Sanctify them through thy truth." Oh! it is the discovery of what God is to us, as revealed in his

word, the knowledge of what God is for us as revealed in his word, the assurance of what he has laid up for us in Christ as our portion, as revealed in his word, which is the means in the hand of the Spirit of God for separating us from the world, and the things of the world, and sanctifying us. "I have given them thy word"—the faithful word, the word of life from God, the word of peace, and of promises all Yea and Amen now, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for evermore, to every one who believeth. As the broken law had been laid up in the ark—the emblem of the Lord Jesus Christ—so the word of the Gospel is laid up by the Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of people, to be fulfilled in them. "I have given them thy word."

Let us endeavour to apprehend our Lord's wonderful words, in such measure as we may, "I have given them thy word." All Christ's gifts are great gifts. When he gave himself, it was a great gift; when he gave his Spirit, it was a great gift; when he gave his word, the Father's word to us, it was a great gift—*three great gifts*. He gave his people all that he had received from the Father. Jehovah had given him *life* for them and *righteousness*, and *a title* to heaven, and he gave them to us. The word, too, which was the divine record of all God's love and purposes towards them, so full of grace, so full of peace, and mercy, truth, and love, he gave to them. "I have given them thy word."

Now, if we take this passage in its highest and fullest meaning, I suppose there can be no doubt it applies, in the first instance, to his Apostles, individually, affording a precious proof from the Lord's own word in prayer

rather, that what we have from the Apostles substantially, is *the word of God*, for he says, "I have given them thy word." He promised also that he would, on his departure, send the Holy Ghost to them, to bring remembrances to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said to them. We have, moreover, the Apostles claiming their teaching that it was not the word of man, but the word of God (1 Thess. ii. 13), "For this cause also thank we God, without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." When our Lord, therefore, declares in our text, "I have given them thy word," he, in the first instance, alludes to that great gift to his Apostles of the testimony of God, given to them as a trust, to be faithfully communicated to us; given to them as a testimony against unbelief, and against the unbelief of the world—given to them as a light from God to irradiate this world's darkness, and that his people might be gathered out of darkness to walk in the light, even as he himself was in the light—and they have faithfully discharged that trust.

But this saying also applies to believers in every day, in every age. "I have given them thy word." The word is the *element*, where faith, and hope, and love, have their existence and their exercise. It is the ground over which faith, and hope, and love, are invited to range, "I have given them thy word." *There* we may find everything to comfort, *there* we may find everything to supply our need, *there* we may find everything to direct us in our difficulties, to cheer us in our pilgrimage,

to light up for us the valley of the shadow of death. *there* we may learn the song of Moses and of the lambs, and begin to sing it even ere we reach our goal, thus beguiling the weariness of the way. When heaven and earth shall have passed away, we shall find that the cross which has been our guide, our source of help, and strength, and consolation, in our difficulties by the way, is a rock beneath our feet, which has sheltered and supported us in many a storm, and it will sustain us when we reach the calm sunshine, where storms can no longer blow over us, and temptations can never weary us.

“I have given them *thy* word.” As truly as the law was given upon Mount Sinai by God,—and it was his word, his law,—so truly the gospel sent us by Christ is God’s word, God’s law. Peter never forgets this part of the prayer. You remember, in Acts xiii, when speaking to Cornelius and his family, he said, “The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ . . . that word, I have ye know.” Oh! it is a blessed thing to realize that the Gospel, so full of joy, and peace, and liberty, and triumph for us, is God’s fulfilled law, is God’s word of salvation to us, that we may triumph in it, and trust in it. You observe our Lord as mediator asserts that he had faithfully discharged his office! God gave him the word to give to us (verse 8), “I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me,”—and here he claims an acknowledgment from his Father, that he has faithfully and faithfully discharged his office, both to his Father and to his people. “I have given them thy word.” When we read a sentence like this, how should our hearts

and up to study that word. If it has come down to
 from such a source, if it has been given to us by such
 a manner, and in such a way, and at such a cost, how
 should we study that word. Well argues the Apostle
 Heb. ii., "Therefore we ought to give the more
 heed to the things we have heard, lest at any
 time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken
 by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and dis-
 obedience received a just recompense of reward, how
 shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which
 at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was
 confirmed unto us by them that heard him?"

But he goes on to say, "the world hath hated them."
 As speaking to his Father. How sweet it is to know,
 to realize that the Father is acquainted with all his poor
 child's trials and difficulties, whether arising from the
 world, the flesh, or the devil. The fact that they have
 faults, conflicts, and trials, secures for them sympathy
 and help from their Father. Oh! I would not have my
 Father ignorant of a solitary corruption of my heart, or
 a difficulty in my way, or an anxiety in my soul; I
 would have him know all, that I might be rid of the
 burden from my own self, and that I might be sure I
 have the Father's tender sympathy with me in my
 faults. "The world hath hated them." The dear
 Father would have his people count the cost before they
 follow under his banner. If we suppose that as servants
 of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as recipients of the word
 of God, we shall have a smooth passage through life,
 we are very greatly mistaken. The Lord here reminds
 his Father and tells his people they shall have no downy

pillow on which to rest; he presents to them no colours; he allures them with no path strewn flowers, but tells them "the world hath hated them. But how comes the world to hate them? It is consequence of his having given them God's word, and this he tells the Father in their hearing. The fact which makes the world hate the servants of God, viz., that they are the depositaries of God's word, makes God love them all the more. Observe, how the Father evidently regards this as an irresistible argument to the Father, securing to his tried people his special presence and his constant care; for at the same time he is pleading, Father, keep thy people, fulfil mine joy in them, sanctify them through thy truth, he tells this also before him—"The world hath hated them.

Observe another very important lesson. God's word entering into a sinner's heart gives light, revealing to him what "eye hath not seen, what ear hath not heard, and what it hath never entered into the heart of man to conceive," revealing new worlds to him, new society, new hopes, new joys, and making him a stranger and a pilgrim here. To every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who fully realizes the word of God, and the promise contained in that word, this world becomes a waste howling wilderness, it is a foreign land, an enemy's country. His country—who has God's word, and who hopes that word communicates in his heart—his country is in the heavens, and the consequence is, the man separate from the world, finds his occupations and pleasures other than the world can supply him with, and the world hates him, for the world hates every one *who really*

the word of God in this world. There must be a change somewhere! Brethren, do not think this a hard saying. What has changed? Has God's truth changed? Has the devil changed? Has the world's enmity to God to his truth changed? And yet now-a-days there do not seem to be the manifest hatred, to believers in Lord Jesus Christ, there once was in the early days of the church of God! Nay, but the professing Christians have changed. Christians are not so like Christ as they ought to be or as they once were. Professing Christians are a vast deal more like the world than they *used* to be, than they *ought* to be, and the consequence is, they are like the world alone, the world lets them alone. They are in a sort of compromise with the world. They are worldly enough to suit the world, and not Christ-like enough to *offend* the world, *that is the honest truth.* But those to whom God in Christ hath committed his word are more under his influence, that is, if they lived more, it would be just as true now as it was in the past when the Lord spake, "I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them."

But "if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." I think that these words also apply, in the first instance, to the disciples, then to believers of every age. To the disciples first; they in a special degree practically experienced the truth of our Lord's words. If you refer to 1 Cor. iv. 9, you read, "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men;" and in verse 11, "Even unto this present we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are beaten, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour,

working with our own hands ; being reviled . . . persecuted . . . being defamed . . . we are made a filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." And why? Ah, Christ tells the reason why! Because "I have given them thy word." But it is true of real Christians now as then. Do you suppose the word of God is obsolete, which says, "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But the world has different ways and means of manifesting its hatred to those who are really living out of the word of God. Satan has tried many a plan ; the alteration of his plans does not prove that his purpose ceased to exist. In the early days he tried persecution but the Church grew under persecution ; then Satan changed his plan ; believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are not persecuted in our day, the age of persecution is at least in abeyance. But Satan had other resources he has tried to corrupt the truth, and he is working hard to do so still, corrupting the Gospel, lowering the standard of God's word, suggesting "oppositions of science falsely so called," and casting doubts upon the reality and truth of revelation ; he has succeeded far more to injure the cause of God in this way than he ever did by persecution. It seems to me in our own day especially, Satan has another and a more subtle plan for paralyzing the word, viz., the *worldliness of those who profess it*. And it is but too apparent that in order to escape the cross and to avoid the hatred of the world, and the charge of being peculiar, the word of God is to a great extent neglected amongst us, and remains ineffectual and unoperative in the hearts, and in the lives, and even

profession, of most of those who call themselves Christians.

When again observe, the world hates all true believers will say, perhaps, this is a very uncharitable assertion; but the statement is not mine but Christ's, and must preach what the word of God declares. But the world is too cunning professedly to display its hatred of Christ-likeness, God-likeness, and holiness, in God's name; therefore, to be consistent with itself, it gives railing names to those who are living for Christ, it derides them and sneers at them, not because they are Christians,—oh, no!—but “because they are so disagreeable, so unsociable, because they are such kill-joys, they judge people so;” and thus they invest the Christian character with what is odious in their own estimation, and present the caricature to others. But this only proves what the Lord asserts, “I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them.” “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are *not of the world*, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” Yes, *hates*,—hates the person, *hates* the principles, *hates* the profession, and *hates* the practice of all true Christians; because their nature is different from the world's nature, their spirit is different from the world's spirit, their worship is different from the world's worship, their conduct is different from the world's conduct, their character is different from the world's character, and their portion, God knows, is different from the world's portion, and the world cannot resist their living testimony against itself, and therefore the world hates them.

But "I have given them thy word,"—that will pensate them for all the world may deprive them of more. That word, received by them, with all its pre and privileges, had been manifestly effectual in ren their souls, and transforming them into the liker Christ, else the world would have taken no note of them. The world hated them in consequence of having ceased to be conformed to the world.

And "they are not of the world." He who was addressing his Father knew all that these words in "They are not of the world,"—nay, they are the children of the Lord God Almighty. Their world is where the sun is not needed, where the Lord Jesus Christ "light," where the shadows never come, and death cannot enter. Their joys are the joys at the right hand for evermore; they are not of this world, they have been "delivered from this present evil world." Christ has died for them, they are the children of the kingdom, journeying along the bright path that shineth brightly and brighter unto the perfect day. They have overcome the world by the blood of the Lamb, they are not of the world, and thus they may well bear its neglect and suffer its hate.

But the Lord further adds what is marvellously calculated to comfort the believer under the cold reproaches he may meet with in the world through which he is passing: "They are not of the world, *even as I am not of the world.*" Identified with him, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, they live in the power of the risen and eternal life, which hath quickened them, and are already more than conquerors, through him

them,—“they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” Absolute union and entire conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ himself, is surely the only way to console them under that opposition from the world, which is, after all, only the evidence and the manifestation of the fact that the world has recognised that

Our Lord's words imply not only “they are not of the world,” but the converse also, they *are* of God, they are of God and joint-heirs with Christ; God is their Father, God's love is their home, God's promise is their security, God's everlasting arms their security—“they are not of the world.” And in the meantime, and till he has taken them out of the world, they are the subjects of the Father's constant intercession. And yet more, the object of the Father's unceasing care, for thus Christ makes his appeal in their behalf,—Holy Father, keep them and sanctify them, for “they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” Well might the great Apostle say, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.”

24

“I have given them thy word; and the world hath them, because they are not of the world, even as not of the world.—JOHN xvii. 14.

ALREADY we have endeavoured to gather some of the fruits which hang so abundantly upon this bough of the tree of life.

In the midst of many arguments which our Lord Jesus Christ pleads for his people with his Father, he says, “I have given them thy word.” I have made them the chosen depositaries of that word which thou hast magnified above all thy name; that word which is the seal and the consummation of all thy loving pur-
 suits and dealings towards them; that word which is the dispensation of thy Spirit, the revelation of thy Son, the communication of thy righteousness, and the pro-
 ceeding to the ends of the earth of thy great salvation. “I have given them thy word,” the divine means and instrument whereby faith shall be begotten in their souls, shall be kindled, and the love of God be shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. Observe the irresistible pleadings which our Lord Jesus Christ presents on his people’s behalf to God.

I. He pleads *the Father’s own interest* in the reason of this—“I have given them *thy word*,” that word in which thy glory is revealed; that word in which thy grace is displayed, and thy love made known; that word in which thy glorious name is proclaimed, thy character revealed, and thy truth sealed; that word which contains, reveals, and communicates the unspeakable

riches of thy Christ; that word, which is thy promise and thine oath to the sons of men, never to be recalled or recalled. I have committed it to them, I have engrafted it into their hearts, I have sealed them with thy word, I have identified it with them; Father, keep them."

2 He pleads their own weakness, helplessness, and their absolute dependence upon the love, and the keeping of the Father. The Lord seems to say they are but dust and ashes, and "I have given *them* the word." Father, where thy treasure is there let thine care be also; and "keep them," for they are utterly incapable of keeping themselves.

3 He pleads—oh! it does seem such a wonderful thing of heart with heart, this prayer of Christ to the Father—he pleads *their position*,—They are not in heaven, Father, they are not where no temptation can reach them, or where our enemies, and their enemies, cannot hurt them, "they are in the world; they are there to learn what they are, and they are there to learn what they are." Father, "keep them."

4 He pleads (verse 18) *that they were not in the world by their own selection*. It is the position *I have chosen for them*; "I have sent them into the world" to be the light of the world, to be the salt of the earth, and I have given them thy word to be their blessing, and they may be made blessings to the world into which I have sent them. Father, "keep them."

5 He pleads (verse 14) their *calling*—"They are in the world," Father. They are in it, but not of it, they are redeemed by my precious blood, they are de-

livered and emancipated from this evil world in which they dwell; "they are not of the world."

6. He pleads *their dignity* as being identified with himself—even *as I* am not of the world, they are not of the world.

7. And lastly, *their danger*—"the world *hates* them. And why? Because I have given them thy word, I have opened heaven to their gaze, I have revealed to them thy love, I have discovered to them their heavenly destiny, thy word has made them strangers and pilgrims here; they are, therefore, separate from the world which care not for it, they are living witnesses against it, and the world hates them.

But the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel—the grace of God, which the Apostles had believed, the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ which he had taught them, and which they had received, were of such a nature as to excite the utmost opposition of the world in which they dwelt. The cross of Christ is an offensive doctrine to the world, although it be the glory of the saint; the Apostle says, "God forbid that I should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The word which the Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples brought down upon them the world's hatred, because *condemned* the world. The word of God proclaimed the world to be a condemned world, and that the only security for the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty is to be taken out of the world; because, as angels said to Lot, so the word of God says to us, "Get ye out of this place, for the Lord will destroy it."

the cry of it is waxen great before the face of the
 of."

The world cannot bear a testimony of this sort, the
 saying of God's word cuts at the root of the world's
 life,—it is entirely opposed to the world's ways, its
 principles, and tastes, and pursuits. We have but to be
 faithful to God's word, and live out the principles, the
 commandments, and the truths which that word incul-
 cates, and we shall learn, in our experience, what the
 apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ bitterly learned in
 their lives—"the world hath hated them."

This hatred of the world towards those who really
 live out God's truth only manifests the hatred of the
 world to God *himself*. "Whosoever therefore will be a
 friend of the world is the enemy of God." How can
 we expect the world to submit to a testimony of this
 kind, or to approve of the principles, or the creed of the
 people who believe and act on such a testimony? And
 yet that word is for ever settled in heaven, it was con-
 ceived in the everlasting love of God, it is being fulfilled
 in God's eternal grace, and it shall be consummated in
 God's everlasting glory, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the
 Father of that word, has meantime given it to the sons
 and daughters of men, that they might "have all joy
 and peace in believing it, that they might abound in
 it through the power of the Holy Ghost," and that
 they might witness to the perishing world into which
 he sent them, that "God so loved the world, that he
 gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth
 in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and
 that "he that believeth not is condemned already."

The world never did and never will submit to C truth. The world never did and never will suff religion truly founded upon it. The truths the wor God reveals, the principles it inculcates, the law commands, are as opposed to the principles of world *as light is opposed to darkness*; and hence ce the temptation, which all feel more or less, while ir world, to be ashamed of Christ and of his words; h the Apostle was led to warn his beloved Timothy, Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of Lord, nor of me his prisoner." The men who have l most faithful to God's word have always been designe "men who have turned the world upside down." S it was said of the Apostles, so would men now say- if they were to speak out their hearts and minds)—o who are really faithfully and consistently fighting u the outspread banner which the Lord God Almighty l given us "to be displayed because of the truth." is an easy thing to fold the banner up, it is an easy th to hide our colours as we go through the world; b it was not for this that Christ gave his Father's wor to his disciples, it was not for this that Christ sent his disciples into the world. Has the world then no relig Yes. It has, it always had, but it is a religion wh changes and varies just as it suits the convenience, prejudices, and superstitions of men. But the trus and doctrines of the everlasting Gospel *are contrar to all nature's highest attainments*, and declare to us "the things which are highly esteemed amongst r are abomination in the sight of God."

Just attend to a few specimens of the teaching of te

apostles, in the discharge of their trust as the receivers
 of God's word. One cardinal truth they proclaimed,
 which runs through all their teaching, is the *absolute*
 nature of fallen humanity—that there is not a redeeming
 principle in human nature, not one; not a single principle,
 not a single tendency or attainment, but what is utterly
 corrupt, and abominable in the sight of God. Do
 you believe this, and can you imagine the world sub-
 mitting to such teachers or such teaching? Such
 a position it calls narrow-minded bigotry; yet, after all,
 it is God's truth. We have a description in Romans iii.
 10, which is the portrait of every natural man. We
 have also a statement corresponding to this, in the
 Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, John iii. 6, and
 repeated by St. Paul in Rom. viii. 8, "that which is
 born of the flesh is flesh," and "they that are in the flesh
 cannot please God." By the flesh is meant unrenewed
 human nature, the natural man as he is; don't suppose
 it means the gross and sensual merely, there is such a
 thing as refined character and taste in the world; there
 is a refined and cultivated world, and the gross sensual
 world; but whether it be the refined, or whether it be
 degraded, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh,"
 and "they that are in the flesh,"—whether they be
 elegant or moral, or inelegant and immoral,—"cannot
 please God." Now can you not understand how intensely
 the world hates and must hate truths like these? It there-
 fore tries to disparage them, to ignore them, and to make
 mock of those who believe and endeavour to act upon them.
 Then follows the glorious Gospel which the Apostles
 were taught to proclaim, and did proclaim—that the

Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, became a man "died for the *ungodly*"—not for the good but for bad, not for people who are sorry for sin, but for people who are not even anxious to be sorry for sin. The world slights this truth, because it likes to get credit for penitence and good resolutions. The word of God on the other hand, declares that when man was utterly bankrupt, an enemy to God, alien, afar off, the servant of the devil, God the Son took human nature, and died for him in his *ungodliness*; that he came from heaven not to call the righteous, simply because there were enough righteous to call; that he came to call poor lost sinners. Ah! this is blessed news when a man knows he is a poor lost sinner, but it is exceedingly insulting to the self-righteous spirit of the world, therefore, the world will not receive it, never did, and *never will*. If you carry out these principles and speak of them, the world's opposition to you will be quickly seen. The Apostles taught that the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ has completely settled the question of sin *for ever*, and that no matter who the sinner is, how far he may have been, how far wandered from God, at the moment he receives, by faith, the Lord Jesus Christ and God's testimony concerning his atonement on the cross, that moment he is *justified from all things*; that the blood of Christ has met all that sin hath done, and this, without reference to the tears, the prayers, the sorrow, the repentance, the religion, or the religiousness of the sinner; *he did it himself*, his own glorious "with his own right hand, and with his holy arm, he gotten himself the victory." Will the world ever

aching like that? Why, it makes nothing of all the world's religiousness, nothing of all its good intentions, society, its church-going, or its prayers!

The next great thing the Apostles taught was that Christ is risen from the dead, and become the new and living resurrection-head of the people of God in this world, that our life now on earth *is the life Christ lives at the right hand of God*. That there is no other life in which the soul can stand before its Judge, no other life in which the soul can enjoy its Father, no other life in which the soul can be accepted and glorified, but the life of Christ! "because I live, ye shall live also" — as I live, as long as I live, and where I live! Oh! this is the joy of the man who believes, and it is God's testimony, the precious "word" he commissioned our Lord to give to his people.

Another truth that the Apostles taught was this, "If a man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;" henceforth his face will be against the things he before loved, he turns his back upon the world he before loved. In fact the word of God creates *a revolution* in the soul when once it enters into it. How very contrary to all this is the world's religion. Alas! the truth of God had not been long proclaimed, before the world, in flesh, and the devil invented a counterfeit, a caricature of it. There is a vast deal of religiousness on every side exactly suited to the pride and the self-righteousness of men, a religion of sentiment, a religion of pious talk, and of good resolutions never carried out; a religion that will converse about ministers and doctrines,

but hates to speak of Jesus, or of the precious blood shed for us; "that is too sacred a subject," says the world, "to be introduced into common conversation, it too solemn to be enjoyed, except in the church and Sundays!" and thus, under the guise of exceeding reverence for it, the word of God is neglected; a religion of externals, attending on forms, ordinances, and ceremonies, a material religion is substituted, a yearning for something that the senses may deal with; where faith in God's word is laid aside, and faith in sacraments takes its place. Brethren, this is not faith but *credulity*! All men will believe anything but that which is revealed that which is true. Jesus forewarned the world that would be so when he said, "I have come to you in my Father's name and ye receive me not, another will come in his own name, and *him ye will receive.*" A religion in which man is exalted, in which the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ is interfered with and intruded on, in which puppets of the earth call themselves sacrifice priests; a religion in which idolatry is perpetrated as truly as ever it was when Aaron and Israel made the golden calf and proclaimed a feast to Jehovah, is being foisted on us. Remember, it is written they proclaimed a feast *to Jehovah!* and worshipped the calf! It might be said they understood and intended by the calf only something which *represented* Jehovah. Exactly so, but therein consisted *their idolatry* before God. Have we forgotten the second commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt

not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." And who will tell us that in the day in which we live there is not a practical worship of sacramental emblems; aye, a worship of the elements of bread and wine. We may take it from ourselves as we like, but who has not observed at the Lord's table, the superstitious, unscriptural way in which some receive the bread and the wine. A material sensuous religion is the world's delight. Christ gave to his people *the word of God*; faithless churches substitute for it their priesthood and their sacraments. Until lately, the sort of religion I am rash enough to describe, was confined to the apostate Church of Rome; there you have a sensuous religion in perfection, visible, material objects, for worship—an earthly and pompous priesthood claiming a divine right to be the exclusive channels of Almighty grace, professing to have power and authority to impart spiritual life *in baptism*, a life to be subsequently nourished and maintained by what they call the action of the divine "*sacrifice on the altar*," but which blessed sacrament is the truth our Lord's own living memorial left with us that we may shew forth his death until he come. Nor is this all. Confession of sin is demanded and absolution given, and all spiritual transactions between God and the soul are professedly undertaken and accomplished by *sinful men*, calling themselves priests of God. Can we wonder at the almost absolute power and control exercised by them over the consciences and feelings of those who believe in them? Until lately, I say, this religion was *Roman*; now, alas! it is becoming *Anglican*. And when we think of this being in Bible-flooded, privileged England,

we are reminded of the Apostle's indignant and sorrowful expostulation—"Ye suffer fools gladly, see ye yourself are wise; for ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face"—2 Cor. xi. 19, 20. May God Almighty keep us close to his word. You will not find *these things* in the word of God, however you may find *plausible arguments* such things in the naturally *imperfect* forms and ceremonies men have invented or compiled.

Well, the world's religion is a common one, and the world's religionist is *an every day character*. Let me describe him for you,—he is regular at ordinances, careful to observe seasons *ordained by the church*, gives his money liberally to the church, and to relieve the poor, he tries to do his duty, and is pretty confident that he is not altogether unsuccessful in performing it to God and to man; he leaves it to bigots and to clerical men to argue about creeds, and he thanks God that he is much more open-hearted and liberal than many people sees about him! Here is just a companion for the Pharisee who stood in the temple and thanked God that he was not as other men are, "or even like this publican." You will say to me, is not such a man in a good way to heaven? amiable, kind, generous, doing his best, surely such an one *is* on his way to heaven! But the word of God declares, *if that be all*, he shall never enter into the kingdom of God. My brethren, the glorious home into which the Lord Jesus Christ entered to prepare a place for those who receive his word has only one door, and that door is *himself*; if you do not enter

at door you cannot enter at all. There is but *one title* that inheritance, and that is the *precious blood* of us; away with all your titles, if you have not got this; you will be utterly refused, and all the more disappointed when you present yourselves, to find all your arrangements ignored, all the church arrangements ignored, and all the priest's arrangements ignored, for there is only "*one name* under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you have not got that name in your heart, if you have not got that name in your creed, if his love, if his life, if his salvation are not *made yours* by which you will never enter the kingdom of God. This is the word the Lord Jesus left with his disciples. There is *one meetness* for heaven, and that is the Holy Ghost dwelling in you; there is *one means* whereby the Holy Ghost, and life, and joy and peace may be obtained—the *precious word of God*; for which men substitute sermons, ordinances, sacraments, confessions, and I know not what. The Lord did not say, I have given them life, but "*I have given them thy word*; and the world which hated them, because *they are not of the world*, even I am not of the world."

There are three principles laid down in the word of God as essential to true Christianity. One is *regeneration*—a new and divine life in the soul; another is *separation* from the world; and another is *consecration* to God. There is no divine religion, no true Christianity without these. Regeneration is not by baptism, it is by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. I suppose St. Peter knew how this life was bestowed;

read I Pet. i. 23, and you find "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Separation from the world is the result of the reception of Christ into the heart; it does not consist in sisterhood and monasteries, or ascetic communities, it consists in the heart having learned him; and the heart that has received him, can be with him even in a crowd. The third principle is consecration to God, and that not upon saints' days and holy days, or at Lenten times only. It is strange how much larger our congregations are at Lent than when Lent is over. Is it only for Lent people come? is it only for sabbath days, men consecrate themselves to God? This is the world's religion. People will attend to all ordinances, and then spend the rest of the day as *the world invites them*, and go to the world's pleasures, to the world's follies, and to the world's sins. Such religion the world will never disapprove, nor can it, because it ministers to the world; *but it is not the truth of God.*

But probably there is nothing in the word of God which more excites the enmity of the world against the saints of God, as receivers of his word, than the sovereignty of the grace it teaches them to profess, and the assurance of salvation it enables them to enjoy.

The world calls the first bigotry, and the latter presumption! Brethren, every man who has been called out of darkness into light, will acknowledge that he owes to the sovereign grace of God that he has been brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ; and that grace, whose height, and depth, and length, and breadth

man can fathom or describe, has made him to differ. Never men may theorize on the doctrine, in the individual case, no man has ever come to Christ who has not been made conscious that omnipotent grace laid hold on him, and omnipotent love constrained him, and would not let him go, that it was the sovereign grace of God alone which brought him out of darkness into his glorious light, from the power of sin and Satan unto life. The world's self-esteem is offended, as it reads: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, because it seemed good in thy sight." How it tends proud human nature to be told that all the world's boasted learning goes for nothing, that all the world's great wisdom goes for nothing, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," and that "after that in the wisdom of God, the world by its own wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by *the foolishness* of preaching, to save them that believe, that Christ crucified is unto "the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that believe, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God;" the world hates such doctrine; then the assurance of salvation which the Lord gives his people, enabling them to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory,—I know that he has given me eternal life, and that he gave it to me in Christ Jesus, *before the world was*. How do I know? Because he says it. "I know that when he shall appear I shall be like him, for I shall see him as he is." How do I know? His word

says it. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my heart shall I see God ; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." How do I know his word says it. The devil and unbelieving men try to impose other substitutes for the word of God ; the professing church, her sacraments, priestism, forms, and ceremonies and traditions—alas the churches of Christendom have neglected God's word ! while men sleep the devil has sown tares,—people now almost worship the church, God *will judge the church*. There was a time when the church was in danger of being corrupted by the world ; let us take heed if we be not in danger of seeing the world corrupted by the church. Brethren let us judge all things and all men, too, by the word of God, and not the word of God by human systems and many of them human follies,—for by the word of God we stand or fall.

"And the world hath hated them." This is the world that you love, some of you, and pet and pursue and fondle and imitate—*the world for which you educate your children* ; this is the world whose society you love to mix with, and whose smiles you court—whose ways and principles and habits and worship you imitate, and where you find your choicest companions. You escape the cross by doing so ; but you do not please him who says "I have given them thy word ; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world even though I am not of the world."

25

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world."—JOHN xvii. 15.

Each petition is expressed for his dear people, our Lord seems to open out his whole heart afresh, and this shows how dearly he loved them, how fully he knew their need, and how deeply intent he was upon providing for all their cases of difficulty, and for all circumstances of sorrow. Our Lord Jesus Christ could not express more; nor could his disciples, under circumstances that ever might arise in their earthly journey, need more than our blessed Lord asks for them. His petitions were not for his disciples alone, but for those also which should believe on him through their testimony; and they embrace every blessing of the Father's everlasting love. Yet methinks the words I have just read must have sounded very strangely in their ears. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." They had heard him say, "All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." They had heard him plead, "These are in the world, and I have committed them to thee;" and yet he says "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." Our Lord was about to leave his dear people, and he speaks as he here speaks in their hearing, that when he should be in glory he might remember what he had said while he was on earth, and not only so, but that the remembrance of what he had said might comfort them in their tribulations, and that notwithstanding the

many trials in the wilderness, "they might have joy fulfilled in themselves."

Now, it must have occurred to us as exceedingly strange, perplexing, and mysterious, that we should be placed in a world such as this, in which we are so exposed to evil thoughts and evil desires; in ourselves so weak and impotent to what is evil, and impotent for anything that is good; surrounded on every side by difficulties and temptations—fightings without and fears within: where we are constantly solicited by an evil heart of unbelief to do what we ought not to do, and to be what we ought not to be—a world which is filled with the peculiar attractions suited to our fallen corrupt nature; where we have to wrestle not only "against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" which, humanly speaking, it is impossible for us either to avoid or to overcome. To hear our Lord say under such circumstances, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world," is surely a thing very wonderful, if not very mysterious.

Let us enquire how is it, and why is it he thus speaks. Is it that he was not able to remove his people out of the trials and temptations, the difficulties, disappointments and snares of this world? "All power," he says, "is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Is it that he was not willing to take them out of the world, if the reason were really for their good? Oh, no! he "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." Is it that his victory over the world was not complete? We have his own word for it, "I have

re the world." "The Son of God was manifested, and he might destroy the works of the devil." Is it that he was not aware of the character and enmity of this world in which he was leaving his people? "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "The world hath hated them." "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." He knew all. Is it that he did not love them, that he was indifferent to the trials, disappointments, afflictions, and persecutions which awaited them? By no means. He loved them, and gave himself for them, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he gave himself up for them, that he might deliver them unto the end." The sufferings of his people in this present time are the "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Is it that he did not know their weakness, their failures, and wanderings, that he was not aware that they would often and sadly fall, grieving themselves and grieving him? He knew all. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made a secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them."—Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16. "Like a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."—Ps. ciii. 13, 14. Is it that they were *not* his own children, the purchase of his blood, the gift of his Father? Why, not less than seven

times in this prayer alone, he speaks of them as his
 "given" to him of his Father! Is it that he has
 manifested to them his Father's name, or given to
 his Father's word? Nay, he had just told the Father
 their hearing that he had done *both the one and the other*.
 Is it that they had not believed his word? He has
 declared for them and of them, "They have received
 thy words, "they have believed that thou didst send
 me!" Is it that he has not secured to them the Holy
 Ghost? "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you
 another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."
 Is it that they were not united to himself, partakers of
 his grace, and to be partakers of his glory? "The things
 which thou gavest me I have given them; that they
 may be one, even as we are one." And yet he has
 said, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of
 the world."

Now, under all these circumstances, we might have
 thought his prayer would have been exactly the reverse
 site; we might have expected him to say, "Father, I
 remove my redeemed ones, translate my treasure from
 this world to the Father's house, from the world's corrupted and corrupting at-
 mosphere, from a scene where tears and conflicts and tribu-
 lations and failures, and humiliations, and distresses
 will surround them on every side; Father, I have re-
 vealed thy love to them, I have fulfilled thy law, I have
 magnified thy name, I have brought in everlasting life and
 peace, I have entitiled thee to send them the Holy
 Ghost, and to make them thy living temples, I have
 purchased and bequeathed to them their inheritance,
 and now, Father, translate them that they may be with
 thee."

self, where no tears can dim their eyes, where no snow can chill their hearts, and where thou art all and all!" We might suppose that *this* would have been the Lord's prayer, but he does not desire it; on the contrary, he distinctly states, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world."

We may learn here at the outset, how very little qualified we are to judge of the ways of God in his dealings with his people; how very little we can understand or fathom the depths of his wisdom, his love, and his goodness; nay, how very much we are in danger, if we keep not closely to his word, of misunderstanding his dealings with us. Here we are in the world—a world that hated Christ and crucified him,—a world where every sort of evil surrounds us, and where every temptation is set before poor fallen nature besets us on every side—a world which it is utterly impossible to pass through without being sullied on the way, yet we are sent into it by Christ, and being sent into it we hear him say to the Father and our Father, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world." It is not a kind world to his people, it is not a holy world, and our passage through it is oftentimes a weary one—weariness to ourselves, and may we not add weariness to our God, "for we have wearied him with our iniquities, and make him weary with our sins." As easy would it have been for him to remove us immediately, in the power of that blood which was presented in heaven on our behalf;—as easy would it have been for the Lord Jesus, after having perfectly forgiven us, and perfectly justified us, and sanctified us, and adopted us into the family of the

great King, and given us to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with himself;—as easy to have brought us all in himself, with himself, and for himself, and to himself into the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Yet he says, “I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world.”

Truly, there must be many and potent reasons why under all these circumstances, we should be left here. However, of one thing we may be quite sure, it is for the glory of the Lord we are here, in the world; and so, depend upon it we are not here at our own charge, depend upon it we are not left to battle in our own strength, nor are we here without the sympathy of Him who is love itself, nor without the saving help of His right hand. “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.” Now, we read that when the Lord delivered His people out of the land of Egypt, he led them by the Red Sea into the wilderness. Refer for a moment to Ps. cvii. We read in verse 4: “They wandered in the wilderness, in a *solitary way* ;” verse 7: “He led them forth by *the right way*.” It may have been a solitary way, but it was the right way. Again, see verse 9: “they found *no city* to dwell in ;” verse 7: “that they might *go to a city* of habitation ;” verse 5: “Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them ;” verse 9: “He *satisfieth* the longing soul, and *filleth* the hungry soul with goodness ;” verse 10: They sat “in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron ;” verse 14: “He *brought them out of darkness* and

shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." And Deut. viii. 2, 3, we find Moses thus addressing God in the wilderness: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest obey his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live."

Also, when our Lord Jesus Christ himself was upon earth, in the days of his flesh, when the heaven was opened unto him, and his Father's voice was heard proclaiming "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," when the Holy Ghost descended like a dove, and abode upon him, the first thing the Spirit did was to lead him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. "Though he were a Son," yet learned he obedience by "the things which he suffered." And into the wilderness our Father leads all his children. "Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." (She would not have been there if she had been in the garden.) "And I will bring her vineyards from thence,"—a strange place to plant her grapes in,— "and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."—Hosea ii. 14, 15.

I will now mention four reasons, out of many,

which we may suppose prompted our Lord to
 "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of
 world."

I. Perhaps this weary wilderness is the only place—certainly it is the *best* place—in which to teach three lessons, the most important lessons that can be learned outside heaven, and which it is absolutely necessary for every child of God experimentally to learn. And what are they? 1. We are here to learn our nothingness, our weakness, our emptiness, our unworthiness; the variety of our corruptions, and the strangeness and greatness of our unbelief. God knows there is no place like the world for teaching lessons like these. 2. We are here to learn the strength and number of our enemies. Verily, they are like giants, and we are grasshoppers, one of them could chase a thousand of us; we are no match for the great trinity of evil—the world, the flesh, and the devil; we find ourselves crushed before the moth, bruised reeds are not more weak, and smoking flax not so easily quenched as is the strength of the poor sinner. We wrestle with the strong powers of darkness, and it is well we should know our weakness, on the one hand, and the strength and number of our foes, on the other. 3. We are here to learn—the world is well suited as the place to teach us the faithfulness, the love, the care, the longsuffering, and the goodness of our God. Oh! how he holds us, how he keeps us, shelters us, carries us as on eagles' wings, else surely by this time we should have been utterly swallowed up.

II. But there is another reason why the Lord says
 "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of world."

world." We are predestinated by our heavenly Father to be conformed to the image of his Son. In heaven we shall be conformed to his image, as he is, in the glory, but we are left in this world's wilderness to be made conformable to his image in suffering, "to know the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death,"—to be like *him* rejected of the world, to be like *him* accepted of the evil one, to be like *him* loving, trusting dependents upon the care and faithfulness of our Father, living a life of faith, drawing upon the Father for hope, for strength, for joy, for peace, for protection; for victory, for everything. Therefore are we in the world.

III. Another reason is, this world belongs to Christ. He has a kingdom *in* the world, though his kingdom is not *of* the world; and he needs servants to serve him here, he needs ambassadors to go upon his messages, he needs witnesses to testify of the glory of his grace, he needs subjects to do his will, to keep his charge, to be made happy under his rule, and to wait for his coming. Thank God for the privilege of being in the world, to witness for him where he is rejected, though it be but for a little while! Thank God for the privilege of being allowed to glorify him in the world (the *only* place in which we can glorify him), and to go now and then upon his messages! Oh! would we had more heart for it, would that we were more true to him as the subjects of his kingdom.

IV. Another reason is, the world is yours, not only Christ's, but yours: in 1 Cor. iii. 22, we learn the amazing truth, "the world is yours." God has given it

to you as "the *field*" in which you are to sow the seed of eternal truth and life, and where you are to gather harvest for the great God. The world is yours—*battle-plain* where God has placed you to fight the good fight of faith, his own enlisted soldiers, armed with the armour of God, and where he has promised to make you more "than conquerors through him that loveth you." There you are to battle with the prince of darkness, there you are to battle with the flesh and the world. The world is yours,—it is the *great deep* where storms oftentimes rock us, where billows so oftentimes seem to sweep over our souls, where many a sunken rock is hidden and where many a gallant ship has foundered. We are here to prove the skill of our pilot. Have you Jesus at the helm, brethren? The world is yours. It is *the school* to which God has sent you to learn many important lessons. We are here to learn *what sin is*. People make a great mistake as to why Christians are in the world; it is not that they may be made angels but that they may learn what sin is, and what self-denial that they may know experimentally how to wait patiently upon the Lord. Some children of God are sadly tried and exercised in the world. There are some who seem never to be rid of sore temptations, others are afflicted with grievous bodily pain and suffering, others lose the friends they loved best on earth, others are allowed to outlive the use of their faculties. Dear brethren, "Fear none of those things which ye shall suffer." If we had need to fear them we had never heard him say, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." The answer to all our hearts' disquieting anxieties

disturbing fears is this: "Be still and know that I
God."

The world is yours. It is the *hospital* where we can
minister to Christ's members, and in ministering to his
members we are privileged to minister to Christ himself.
I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was
thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye
took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and
ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least
of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." These
services which can be rendered to God and to his
Christ, only while we are in the world. Who would
forego the privilege, who understands how much
we owe? The world is yours. It is our opportunity
of trusting Christ, even though "we walk in darkness
and have no light." It is our opportunity for committing
ourselves all, for time and for eternity, and hoping to
obtain the grace that is to be brought unto us as
the revelation of Jesus Christ. "The world" is our
opportunity for making it manifest that though we have
not seen him, we love him better than the things we see.
It is greatly for the Lord's glory that it should be so;
therefore, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out
of the world."

Let us then be content to remain. It costs our lov-
ing Christ far more to have us *here* than it *can* cost us.
Remember that. Our circumstances of trial are his cir-
cumstances of trial, and they call forth all his sympathy;
his presence shall surely go with us. He is never so
near his plants as when they are being pruned by him;

he will never leave us, never forsake us. His glory is more fully displayed in keeping us from the evil *there* than in crowning us with the glory *there*. And if at any time, under the pressure of great trial, and wearied by reason of the disappointments and the crushing sorrows of the way, we pray the Father to take us hence, we are thinking more of our own ease than of his glory, he said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world."

Now let us enumerate a few of the encouragements our Lord has left with his people, to support them while they are in the world. And first, the question of our salvation is settled (I speak to you as believing children of God), the question of our salvation *is settled*; we are saved!—"saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." We are not *of* this world, though we are *in* it. We have been translated *out* of the kingdom of darkness, we have been introduced *into* the kingdom of God's dear Son; our title has not to be made out, it has been *already* secured to us. The precious blood is our title, and he who shed it has gone within the veil to present it, as our representative. Our meetness and qualification for heaven and for glory has not to be bestowed, it has been *already* bestowed. Our meetness is the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us. The moment the Holy Ghost enters the soul of a believing sinner, that man is as "meet for glory" as if he lived in the school of glory for a thousand years. These considerations are most important. "Let us give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. i. 12. Things present or things

Some cannot separate us from his love ; our inheritance is secure, and, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

If we are left here it is because the Lord has need of our emptiness, our weakness, the variety of our temptations and temperaments, the peculiar character of our temptations, the disappointments, the dangers and difficulties with which his poor people are possessed and surrounded, that it may be made manifest that there never was a case, or a circumstance, or a sorrow, or a sin, or a difficulty, for which there was not a remedy and a supply in his fulness and in his love. Our need suits his fulness, and his fulness corresponds to our need ; there must needs be the infinite variety of cases, and of characters, of temptations, and of necessities, which exists amongst the children of God, in order that there may be full scope, occasion and opportunity for displaying the infinite varieties of the fulness, the love, grace, mercy, and salvation, laid up in the Lord Jesus Christ for his dear people, that in the relief and deliverance from all their troubles, he might win for himself an everlasting name.

So long, then, as there remains one lesson to be learned concerning our Saviour's grace, or our own need, so long as the love which passeth knowledge may be more fully known, so long as there is anything to be done for him, or anything to be suffered in his cause, so long as there is a soul to be comforted, a poor wanderer to be brought home, a mourner to be cheered, let us be ready to be here, and to tarry our Lord's leisure, even though our lot be cast where Satan dwelleth. His eye

is upon us ; he will not leave us nor forsake us. He said "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world" knows well how to keep us in it.

May our souls drink more into his Spirit and more dealings with his love, and with his word, which remain here, for his name's sake !

26

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one."
JOHN xvii. 15.

WE have already dwelt upon the first part of this verse. No one knew better than our Lord did the nature and the character of that world in which he was leaving his people. He had fully experienced its opposition to all that was good, to all that was heavenly, to all that was true. For three and thirty years he had cast his lot here, enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself, and the world had been to him a "dry and barren land, where no water is." The only egress from it was that by which he was so soon to pass, and he knew that the only way of egress from it for his disciples was by the same road ; and yet, he says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." He knew the weakness, the worse than weakness, of his people ; he knew their corruptions, he knew how utterly unable they were to keep themselves for one single moment, and he knew it too well to leave them un-

and unprovided for in the world. Therefore, we find him cheering them with promises, and sheltering them with prayer.

You observe there are two things taken for granted all through this prayer—first, their conversion to God ; and, secondly, the mutual interest which his people have in him, and which Christ has in them. He does not pray for these things, he speaks of them as matters of fact : “ I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me and they have received them, and they have known me, that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” Then, with *one* exception, in verse 24, where he prays, “ Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me,” the rest of the prayer, from beginning to end, is for their protection in the world, and their sanctification through the truth.

“ Keep them from the evil ” is the burden of his prayer. “ Keep them from the evil ” is the boon which he pleads for with his Father, urging every possible consideration in order that it may be surely granted. “ Glorify thy Son,” in keeping them. “ I have given them thy word ! ” “ Keep them.” “ I pray for them ! ” “ Keep them.” “ I am glorified in them ! ” “ Keep them.” Holy Father ! “ keep them.” I plead thy name. I plead thy gift of them to me. I plead thy word. The world hates them. “ They are not of the world, as I am not of the world.” “ Keep them.” “ I am not thou shouldest take them out of the world, that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” I

leave them here in the world, to learn their own need, their indescribable weakness and emptiness; leave them here to learn the strength of the foes which they have to battle, and from which I have pledged myself to deliver them; I leave them here that they may learn their Father's loving, tender, holy and powerful protection. Father! "keep them from the evil."

A most interesting and a most important question here suggests itself for our consideration. We may doubt—indeed, we dare not doubt—that our Lord's prayer for his disciples has been heard and answered, and not for his disciples only. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." We cannot doubt that the promise "keep them," has been registered in the heart of God. Indeed, the relation of Jehovah to his people as their keeper is the burden of many an Old Testament promise. For instance, "He will keep the feet of the saints," "He that keepeth thee will not slumber," "The Lord is thy keeper," "He shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul." So, also, the burden of some of the most precious promises of the New Testament has reference to this relationship of the Lord to his people. "The Lord is faithful, who will establish you, and keep you from evil." "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." You remember St. Peter's beautiful description; "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation;" such is his inspired account of the security of the Lord's people. Now, as all these promises and engagements had reference to the Lord Jesus Christ

on and work for sinners, so his prayer is the seal of the endorsement and confirmation of them. "I pray that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but thou shouldest keep them from the evil;" and verily they are kept, constantly, effectually, triumphantly, they are kept from all evil, all the time they are in the world, else surely the Lord's prayer has not been answered. I do not see how the truth of this can be questioned.

Now if this prayer has been heard, *how is it answered?*

The history of the church of God, and the individual experience of every member of it, sufficiently proves that we are not secured from outward tribulations, distresses, persecutions, obloquy, and even violent assaults from the world, the flesh, and the devil. A glance at the Apostle's account in 1 Cor. iv. 9-13, will sufficiently evidence this: "I think that God hath set us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools . . . we are weak . . . we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no dwelling-place . . . being reviled . . . being persecuted . . . being defamed . . . we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day." And yet the Lord Jesus prayed, when the Lord Jesus Christ was heard, "Keep them from evil."

The experience of the church of God, and the individual experience of every member of it, also proves

that we are not secured from *spiritual conflicts*. A glance at Eph. vi. will prove the truth of what I say, even if our own experience did not prove it. In verses 11-13 we are counselled to "put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" and we are not always successful in the struggle. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ prayed, and the Lord Jesus Christ was heard, "Keep them from the evil."

3. The experience of the church of God, and of every individual member of it, also proves that we are not secured from *temptations* arising from various sources. They are even called in Scripture "*fiery trials*," not necessarily resulting from the malice of the devil, and the weakness of self, but from contact with the evil which is in the world, the entanglements of the world, evil companionships which we cannot get rid of, evil influences and evil associations. And yet the Lord prayed, and the Lord was heard, "Keep them from the evil."

4. Nor are we secured from *humiliating failures* in service. Witness Peter, how humbling was the failure of that great Apostle. Witness the failure of all the other Apostles in the hour of their Master's need, "they all forsook him and fled." What shameful cowardice and what humiliating ingratitude! Subsequently, in the Acts of the Apostles, we find them disputing with one another, and the dissension in one instance was so great between Paul and Barnabas that "they departed

uder, one from the other." And after all his experience of his own weakness, Peter again failed; he was found dissembling, and was openly rebuked before the whole church. These were truly very sad failures. And the Lord prayed, and the Lord was heard, "Keep them from the evil."

4. Our experience proves that we are not secured from *grievous bodily suffering* (how various the painful diseases from which many dear children of God suffer), nor from crushing bereavements, loss of health, loss of assistance, death itself; aye, *painful* deaths. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ prayed, and was heard. "Keep them from the evil."

5. We are not secured—surely the experience of every one I am addressing endorses what I say—we are not secured from *the burden of self*, we are not secured from the conscious coldness, hardness, and deadness of our own corrupt heart and nature, Is it only the Apostle Paul who was compelled to cry, "Oh, wretched man, what I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Was it only the Apostle who has need to confess, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened?" And yet the Lord Jesus Christ prayed and was heard, "Keep them from the evil."

6. And lastly, we are not secured from *actual sin!* When we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar." Surely it is no empty confession we make day after day in the house of God. "We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have left undone those things which we

ought to have done ; and we have done those things
ought not to have done ; and there is no health in
And yet the Lord Jesus Christ prayed, and the Lord
Jesus Christ was heard, Father, "Keep them from
evil."

Now, brethren, if this be so, not one of these, nor
of them together, constitute *evil* to the people of Christ
or, if evil in themselves, our Lord Jesus Christ's prayer
secures, that good shall be brought out of the evil, and
that all these things "shall work together for good to
them that love God." Nothing is really evil, but
which can separate us from the love of God ; I repeat
it, nothing on earth or in hell is really evil to us, but
which can separate us from the love of God. And
pray you, shall tribulations or distresses, or persecu-
tions, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword be
able to separate us from the love of God which is in
Christ Jesus? "Nay, in all these things we are more
than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom.
viii. 37.) Shall spiritual conflicts separate us from the
love of God? "My grace," he says, "is sufficient for
thee ; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."
Can strong temptations separate us from the love of
God? It is written God is faithful, who will not "suffer
you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will, with
the temptation, also make a way to escape that ye may be
able to bear it!" Can humiliating failures separate us
from the love of God? "I have prayed for thee, that
thy faith fail not," was Peter's security, when Satan
desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat.
Nor can grievous diseases separate us from the love

God which is in Christ Jesus ; nor bereavements, agonies, for "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "If ye are chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?" The self with all its burdens, nor the flesh with all its temptations, can separate us from the love of God. "I am crucified with Christ," and he "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Not even our very sins can separate us from the love of God, for "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We may be puzzled and perplexed by God's mysterious dealings with us, we may sometimes misunderstand the dispensations with which he permits us to be exercised, we may sometimes make mistakes as to what has and what has not been promised ; but one fact we may rest upon—there is no mistake about this, he has prayed, *keep them from the evil.*"

What, then, is the blessing for which the Lord Jesus Christ here prayed ? and what is the evil from which all people, all who believe upon him, are everlastingly preserved ? From all *spiritual hurt*. You remember, in Isaiah lxxxi., which so beautifully sets forth Jehovah as the Father of his people. The emphasis is on this (verse 7), "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil ; *he shall serve thy soul.*" That is only evil *to us* which can hurt *the soul* ; all the other things which we may think evil, and call evil, shall work together for our good. The

evil that can hurt the soul shall never come nigh dwelling, for the Lord Jesus prayed, "Keep them from the evil." No evil, no hurt, no loss, no spiritual evil, evermore prevail to injure the soul of any child of God, whether it arise from the evil one, or from the hatred of the world to Christ and to his cause, or from our own poor, wretched, fallen nature, or from the dominion of the consequences of sin. For the first, we have the promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace;" and for the second, there is the fact that sin and the penal consequences of sin are already put away. None of the evils arising from the snares and blandishments, the attractions, and temptations of the world, can evermore succeed to hurt our souls. Not even the peculiar besetting sin of which each poor child of God is conscious, and of which he mourns; not even his falls shall be permitted to hurt his soul. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise." He that kept the children of Israel in Egypt; he that kept the Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace; he that kept Daniel in the den of lions, shall keep his people from the evil that is in the world, and make them more than conquerors through him that loved them.

Temptations can only manifest us to ourselves, sorrows can only empty us of self, they cannot deprive us of our Christ; difficulties can only humble us, and we cannot be humbled too much; disappointments can only loosen the bonds of the world around us, and disentangle us from its attractions; bodily pains and bereavements can only chasten us; dissolution itself can only deli-

for "where sin abounded grace did much more abund." "Father, I pray not that thou shouldest take him out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep him from the evil." "Fear not : for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." (2 Kings vi. 16.) "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation ; there shall no evil befall thee ; neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways . . . thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder : the young lion and the dragon shall thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him : I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." (Ps. xli. 9-14.) Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days ; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. ii. 10.) "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. iii. 10.)

We may be tempted by unbelief and ignorance, to say, with Jacob of old, "All these things are against me ;" we may, perhaps, be compelled to feel as he did when he stood before Pharaoh—"The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years : *few and evil* have the days of the years of my life been ;" (Gen. xlvii. 9) but, ah ! listen to him at the close (xlviii. 2) : he saith, "God, before whom my fathers, Abraham

and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my long, unto this day, *the Angel which redeemed me from all evil.*" That was his testimony to our God, and thou shalt be the testimony every child of God shall offer, as we look back upon the way by which our Lord led us, however entangled it may have been, however humbling to ourselves it may have been. Father, thou didst redeem us from all evil!

Let us, then, come *boldly* with all our personal and peculiar difficulties and sorrows, our temptations and failures, to the throne of grace. He who sits upon that throne knows us fully; he looks within, he sees the evil that we feel, and how it affects us—our wants, our sorrows, our temptations, our fears, our miseries, our distresses. He has left us in the world that we might experience these things, that we might know the evil from which he has pledged himself to deliver us. We had never known the triumphs of our deliverer, we had never known the preciousness of his blood, we had never known the saving strength of his right hand, if we had not been made personally and experimentally acquainted with our special and peculiar need. He has left us here that we might have such communion with himself, even the glorified in heaven cannot know. Here walking in darkness and having no light, not seeing whither to go, the Holy Ghost enables us to put our hand into his hand, saying, Lord, lead me when thou wilt, where thou wilt, and as thou wilt; in thy strength, and by thy grace, I will follow thee. By-and-by when we come home to heaven he will *glorify us*; but it is only here in this wilderness, in which he has placed us, we can thank

fy him. It is not when we are enjoying Christ most we glorify him best; it is when we are in the deepest humiliation by reason of the experience of our failures, when our hearts are consciously cold and dead, when our feelings are all distressing, when our experience is against us, when we walk in darkness and have no light, when, like Job of old, "we go forward, but he is behind us, backward, but we cannot perceive him, on the right hand, where he doth work, but we cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that we cannot see him." (Job xxiii. 8.) Then to take him upon the mere warrant of his word and to trust him; when we have so little reason to be satisfied with ourselves, to take him for all in all, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, simply resting upon his own greatness, and faithfulness, and mercy, and truth—no archangel in heaven can glorify him, as the wicked sinner does who glorifies him thus.

Therefore, as he has left us here for this purpose, let us have but one thought, one aim, one object, one prayer, even that he would reveal himself to us and teach us to live upon him, and give him credit for his promises, that we would realize more and more to our souls the triumphs of his grace, that we may know assuredly and faithfully he will keep his promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Often we have been cast down, and yet he has lifted us up; often we have been in circumstances out of which we thought there was no escape, and yet he delivered us. How often we have been in dark, dark hours, and yet the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ *did* shine into us.

Beloved, he has not changed—blessed Lord glorious Intercessor! He has a large, and a hel and a needy family, and he knows it; he would them know it too. He has fulness of life, and peace, and rest, righteousness and sanctification, ar demption; all this is for them. He has fulness en to supply all our need, and much more than all our There is more preciousness in his atoning blood there is vileness in all our sins, more strength i saving right hand than could support a thousandfo our weakness. Oh! to be able to comprehend, wit saints, what is the “breadth and length and depth height, and to know the love of Christ which pa knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fu of God.” He could, if he pleased, immediately res us, but in that case his glory would not be display saving us from the evil, maintaining his own work in souls, displaying his power, making his strength pe in our weakness, and often causing the weakest in flock to be a terror to Satan and a wonder to the w Fear not, “he giveth power to the faint, and to t that have no might he increaseth strength.” He is sufficient; he is “all in all”—our God, Saviour, Fr He is all eye to watch over us, all ear to hear u a heart to sympathize with us, and not upbraid us fo failures. Did we live more on the Lord in the exe of faith, on his holy word, we would go on our “rejoicing even in tribulations,” evermore “coming out of the wilderness, leaning on our beloved.”

Let us then come boldly to the throne of grace, when in the full consciousness of our utter unwor

s and notwithstanding the difficulties within us and
 and us, we take him and trust in him as God's great
 to us, and as our strong salvation, his object in
 ng us in this world is well nigh accomplished, and
 he evils that befall us in our way shall prove but
 eezes and the billows to waft us onward, and bear
 our rest.

27

*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the
 world.*—JOHN xvii. 16.

IS fact was evidently one of great importance in our
 esed Lord's mind, for this is the second time we find
 rging it in behalf of his people. In verse 14, he
 y, "I have given them thy word; and the world
 hated them, because they are not of the world,
 as I am not of the world." There he assigns it as
 ason why the world hated his people. And, here
 gn, he assigns it as a reason why they would be ex-
 ed to much evil from the world, the flesh, and the
 el, and he makes it as an argument with his Father
 he should keep them from the evil.

"They are not of the world;" it is our dear Lord's
 account of his people. Do not overlook the stigma
 ch our Lord's words cast upon the world, or the judg-
 at of it which they imply. He says in another place,
 ye were of the world, the world would love his
 ; but because ye are not of the world, but I
 e chosen you out of the world, therefore the
 ld hateth you." Perhaps some of those I am now
 ressing are avowedly of the world; certainly the

great majority of even professing Christians are mistakably of the world ; and yet the Lord says of his disciples, " They are not of the world." By this expression he evidently means not the material world, but the people of the world. The world follows certain principles which are altogether of the world, certain vices, certain pleasures, certain pursuits ; the world has its hopes, its aims, its ends, and its desires, aye, and its religion too, all of them not of the Father, but of the world ; a fearful destiny awaits the world, for we are told " The world and *the works that are therein* shall be burnt up ;" but the Lord says of his people, " They are not of the world." The Lord's people are taught by the Spirit of God to regard the principles of this world as not to be followed above, but from beneath. They are taught that its vices, however applauded in the world, are sinful ; that its pleasures are mere phantoms, that its pursuits are contrary to the revealed will of God, that its happiness is a mere shadow, that its boasted morality is only a splendid course of sin, that its one aim is self, that its religion is a delusion, and that its end is destruction. The Holy Ghost enabled the Apostles of the Lord (though they were simple-minded men) to give utterance to these thoughts, they proclaimed what the Spirit of the Father taught them. They told the world what its true character, weighed in the balances of God's sanctuary, really was : and the world hated them, the world despised them, the world persecuted them unto death. And depend upon it, brethren, if the Lord's people were faithful and outspoken, as the Apostles were, they would find themselves in the same category. We get

the world, because we are not honest with the world, faithful to our God and to his truth. If we were to confess in the world what in our conscience we believe, and what we are taught of God concerning it, depend on it we should find the world hate us.

But what heavenly consolation, what divine engagement our Lord's words supply, as we regard them from the *heavenward side*. "They are not of the world,"—that implies they *are* of Christ, they *are* of the Father, they *are* of the light, they *are* of the truth, they have received God's word, they bear Jehovah's name, they are identified with Christ and his cause. It is on this account the world hates them : it is on this account they are exposed to the evil that is in the world. They are left here for the glory of their Father, that they may stand as monuments to the everlasting praise of his most holy Father, of the grace that kept them, of the Spirit that sanctified them, of the blood that washed them, of the righteousness that covered them, of the gracious faithful Father that guided them, and made them more than conquerors over all within them, as well as over all without them, and caused the hatred and opposition of the world only to bring out into divine contrast his tender, constant care, and the all-prevailing intercession of their Advocate.

So the Lord pleads. His words are as if he said,—Father, it is solely because thy people *are mine*, it is because they have received thy word, it is because of thy love to me, because of their identification with my cause, it is solely on this account they are hated by the world, and shall be despised and persecuted in the world,

therefore my Father keep them, "keep through own name those thou hast given me."—"keep them from the evil." Truly it is a most wonderful and precious *secret* which our Lord here reveals, viz., that all the hatred and opposition of the world towards his people, all the plottings and plannings of the evil one, against their souls, all the worry, the temptations, the distresses, the tribulations in which they are involved, are suffered because he, "the god of the world," hates Christ, because he would, if he could, wound Christ through his members. Our Lord lays this fact before his Father in the hearing of his disciples for his people's comfort and that they might understand the nature and cause of the incessant warfare of which they are conscious, also to assure them that the enemies of their souls—world, the flesh, and the devil—would evermore be utterly overthrown, utterly thwarted, utterly confounded, all their confederacies against his people, through his own intercession before the throne.

"They are not of the world." Brethren, lift up your hearts with me to the Lord. Let us ask him for his light, and the teaching of his Holy Spirit, while we meditate upon the wondrous words before us, revealing to us the true origin, the true portion, and the true destiny of God's believing people. May we realize these things, that our faith may grow exceedingly, and that we may experience in our own souls the victory that overcometh the world.

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Observe, our glorious Lord here asserts what he has taken for granted all through his prayer, even that

mutual interest and identification existing between his
 people and himself. He did not pray for *that* ; he takes
 it for granted all through. What he prays for is, that
 his people may enjoy *the fruits and results* of it, in being
 purified and sanctified ; that they may realize *the manifes-*
tion of it, as we read in v. 21, "that the world may
 believe that thou hast sent me ;" that they may have *the*
revelation of it, as we read in verse 24, where he says
 "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me
 with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory."
 The great fact is not to be forgotten, that the Lord
 Jesus' interest in us, and our interest in him, given by a
 precious Jehovah's love before the world was, is the
 cause and source of all the manifestations of his grace to
 us in time, and will be the cause and source of all the
 manifestations of his glory to us in eternity. The incar-
 nation of the Son of God was the result of the interest
 he had in us ; "Forasmuch
 because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he
 himself likewise took part of the same." The gift
 of the Holy Ghost through his incarnation was also the
 result of our interest in him, for it is written, "Because ye
 love the sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into
 our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." And all he is now
 doing for us in his intercession, and all that shall be
 done for us in his glorious kingdom hereafter, all flow
 from the first great love that gave us to have an interest
 in Christ, and gave Christ to have an interest in us ; and
 when he pleads this identification of his people with him-
 self in order that they may be secured from all evil ;
 "that they may be secured from all evil ;
 that they may be secured from all evil ;
 that they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

I. Let us regard these words, first as referring to *Christ himself*—"I am not of the world." We may consider this statement from *three* points of view.

1. Our glorious Lord was not of the world as to *origin*. No! he was "the Lord from heaven," "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light whom no man can approach unto," "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." "of the world?" He *made* the world! "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "All things were made by him." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "I am from above, ye are from beneath." "The Lord from heaven," "I am not of this world."

2. There is another aspect in which we may view these words, "I am not of the world." His conversation was in heaven: he was in the world, but not of the world; his bodily presence was here, but his home was in the heavens, his Father, his throne, his crown, his rest, his portion, were in the heavens; the glorious Lord dwelt there; no man hath ascended into heaven but "he who came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is *in heaven*." This was not his country, he was no citizen of earthly cities, he was the King of the "heavens which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," where "they need no candle, neither light of sun; for the Lord God giveth them light;" "and the Lamb is the light thereof."

3. There is another sense in which we may view the words "I am not of the world." He says (in verse 11), "Now I am no more in the world." He was just leaving it, and going to another; no longer in the world. His glorious home from whence he descended was about to receive him back again; the harps were waiting, the songs were silent, till he arrived; he was about to go to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God. "That Father's business" had detained him for a little while, and would for a little longer detain him here on earth; his people's salvation was not yet fully accomplished, he had yet a great fight to fight, he had yet a great atonement to make, he had yet a great offering to present; but it was as good as done: he was "not of the world," he was on his way home.

II. Now, mark what he says of *his people*, "they are not of the world." Truly, this is a wonderful statement.

1. What an high origin the words of our blessed Lord ascribe to his dear people—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." *Their origin* is not of earth. "Thine they were and thou gavest them me." They were God's portion, God's inheritance, God's elect, his predestinated companions, predestinated "to be conformed to the image of his Son," that they might be faithful companions for Jehovah; predestinated to share the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they might be the happy children of their Father, "they are born of God," "partakers of the divine nature," "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," the brothers, sisters, and companions of God's first-born; they are the bride of the Lamb, the members of his body, the heirs of the

promises; all things are theirs, the world, life, d things present and things to come, all theirs, bec they are Christ's and Christ is God's. This is origin; for "both he that sanctifieth and they that sanctified are all *of one*, for which cause he is ashamed to call them brethren." They are "not of world, even as I am not of the world." No; Father is *there!* their home is *there!* their portio *there!* their birth is *there.* "A glorious high th from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary, though sent down to earth to learn many a diff lesson which could hardly be learnt elsewhere—Fa "keep them," keep them "from the evil," for "thine were, and thou gavest them me," and they are hated opposed in the world because "they are not of the w even as I am not of the world." Wonderful words! of heavenly comfort.

2. "Even as I am not of the world." This worl *not their country.* In Phil. iii. the Apostle says, of I self and his believing brethren, "Our conversation i heaven"—that is, we are citizens of heaven, our Kir there, the laws of heaven are the laws that bind us, liberties of heaven are our privileges, the language heaven is our language, the glory of heaven is our r and, because heaven is our city and our country, thoughts are there, our desires are there, our expectati are there, our *hearts* are there, because our all is th Brethren, Christ is everything to the new-born soul, supreme object of its affections, and the joy and cro of all its hope; on Christ the faith of the new-born s rests, and in his fulness finds all its portion; its expe

is from him, it lives where he lives, the eye is watching for him, the ear is listening for him, the heart is longing for him, and the feet weary to follow him, though the poor body may be in the world, tempest-tossed, "fighting without and fears within." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

3. "They are not of the world," because *they too are on their way home*. Very soon the journey will be over, and the wilderness be passed, and Jordan shall open its arms for our entrance into the promised land. Here characteristic is that we are "strangers and pilgrims," saith the Lord, "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Now, brethren, suffer a word of practical application to yourselves. Is this our description? Do we correspond to this sketch? Are we "not of the world?" Oh! this is a very searching question. It is written, "Be not conformed to this world." Are we conformed to it? Do we go its way? Are its tastes, its pleasures, its pursuits, its companions ours? or, have we been transformed by the renewing of our minds? Has light from heaven fallen down upon us, and in his light do we see clearly? And having seen light doth the world's light and us seem to be darkness? Are we thanking God who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light?"

"Strangers and pilgrims" are travellers! Are we merely passing through the world, using it, and not enjoying it? "Strangers and pilgrims" never think of building, or settling down in the country where they journey. Their thoughts are upon the building at

home, upon the green fields and sunny smiles at home is the thought that fills their eyes, their hearts, as they travel through the stranger's far land. How is it with ourselves?

"Strangers and pilgrims" are known by their language in the country through which they are passing. It is different from that which is spoken around them; the tone is quite different. Aye, and the dress, therefore they are oftentimes a *gazing-stock* to the people amongst whom, for a short period, their lot is cast. Their manners too are different, you at once perceive it, it strikes you immediately, you would never mistake them for inhabitants of the land in which they are strangers and pilgrims—never! they could not be taken for a single instant. How is it with ourselves? Are we strangers and pilgrims in this world? Is our language different, our manner different, our appearance different? Is it impossible for us to associate with the men of the world without their finding out that we are in the world we are not of it? This is a solemn question. If it is otherwise with us, then we are ashamed of the cross, we are ensnared by the world where we ought to be but as passing strangers.

If a stranger and pilgrim in a far-off land meet a fellow-citizen by the way, one speaking the same language, wearing the same attire, evidently by his manner belonging to the same country as himself, how delighted he is, what sweet intercourse they enjoy! Imagine yourself in a distant land, far away from home associations, amongst utter strangers, whose words and tastes and manners, and language were utterly

sign to you—imagine meeting one of *your own* there, and you would embrace, how you would hold him fast, and soon you would make a companion of him,—you would not do otherwise. How is it with you? When you meet the children of God here on earth, are they of your choice, your delight, your companions?

“Strangers and pilgrims” are not loath to leave the country in which they are sojourning. It would be no unwelcome news to “strangers and pilgrims” to tell them they are called home. It would be no sorrowful tidings to “strangers and pilgrims,” that the business for which they were here was done, and that there was no longer any reason why they should not go home at once to where their children are, and their fathers are, and to where the scenes they love best are—they would be *nothing loath*. How is it with you? “Strangers and pilgrims.” Are you afraid to die?

Afraid to die!—the child of grace,
 Redeemed by Jesus' dying love,—
 Afraid to go, behold his face,—
 Afraid to tread the courts above!

Afraid to fling to nature's night,
 Mortality's cold troubled dress—
 Afraid to take the soaring flight,
 Robed in a Saviour's righteousness!

The eagle, bird of strength and might,
 Fears not to lay his plumage by,
 And with new wings attempt his flight—
 And shall a Christian fear to die?

Oh! that the realization of our heavenly destiny may constrain us—and if it doth not, what else can constrain

us—to live here below as those who are not their
 but bought with a price, as those of whom the ble
 Jesus said on earth, and for whom he is now ple
 in heaven, “Father, keep them from the evil,” for “
 are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

 28

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

JOHN xvii. 17.

OUR Lord Jesus had just prayed to his Father, as
 “holy Father,” to keep his people from “the evil.”
 now further pleads that they may be *sanctified* thro
 that truth, on account of the possession of which, t
 were hated. All that remained was that they might
 glorified, and that petition he afterwards presents
 verse 24. Thus we have fully expressed to us our d
 Lord’s desires for his people; (1) that they should
 preserved from all evil whilst they were in the wor
 (2) that they should be sanctified through the tru
 and (3) that they should be with him to behold
 glory which his Father had given him, and behold
 it, be “changed into the same image from glory to glo
 even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” There is an inse
 able connection between these three petitions.
 those whom he will glorify shall be sanctified thro
 the truth, and kept from the evil that is in the world.

Let us attend to the divine and weighty princip

down in our text, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Whatever may be the means employed by our heavenly Father in the sanctification of his people, God himself alone is the agent. We cannot sanctify ourselves any more than we can preserve ourselves, or glorify ourselves. Observe, in verse 19, the striking emphasis laid upon the petition he now presents: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." This is only one of many passages in which our attention is called to the paramount importance of the sanctification of his people. In Heb. x. 7, "then, said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." What that will is we are told in Heb. x. 10: "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." In chap. xiii. 12, "Jesus . . . that he might sanctify his people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." And in 1 Pet. i. 2, we read this account of God's election, "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." As we learn that our sanctification by the Holy Spirit is the result of our sanctification in the Lord Jesus Christ.

How strikingly this great truth was pictured in the Old Testament. See Exod. xxviii. 36-38: "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the fore-front of the mitre it shall be.

And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron bear the iniquity of *the holy things*, which the child Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts ; and it shall *always* upon his forehead." Now observe the reason why Holiness to the Lord was always prominent upon the High Priest's forehead,—"*that he may be accepted before the Lord.*" It was a wonderful picture of the complete consecration of the Lord Christ as High Priest, who is evermore Holiness to the Lord, that his people may be always accepted before the Lord ; and, so long as "Holiness to the Lord" is written upon the brow of our ascended Saviour, so shall we, notwithstanding the iniquity of our holy things (and if the iniquity of our *holy things*, how much more the iniquity of our unholy things), be nevertheless more accepted before the Lord.

The sanctification of the Lord's people is a very important matter. In truth, all God's dealings with his people in grace seem to have respect unto this. If we are *chosen*, it is "that we should be holy ; if *predestinated*, it is that we should "be conformed to the image of his Son who *redeemed* by the Son, it is that we might be "redeemed from all iniquity, and purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ;" if *called* by the Holy Ghost, it is with "an holy calling ;" and if the *truth* is *revealed* unto us, it is that we may be "sanctified through the truth," if he *restoreth our souls*, it is that he "lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Nay, if even he *chasten* us, it is that "we may be partakers of his holiness."—"Sanctify them through thy truth."

Now, in order that we may clearly understand our subject, remember there are two principal uses of the *sanctification* in Scripture. Primarily, to sanctify or set apart for God's sole use, and *all* the allusions to sanctification in the Bible have their *root* in this meaning. Thus God is said to sanctify the seventh day, that is, to set it apart for his own and his people's rest. Thus God is said to sanctify the first-born, that is, he set them apart for himself and for the peculiar privileges he intended for them. Thus the tabernacle and all its vessels were sanctified; and it is in this sense we understand that remarkable statement made by the Lord Jesus Christ concerning himself,—“Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou art the Son of God; because he said, I am the Son of God.” (John x. 36.)

But there is another meaning of sanctification in Scripture, involving and including the *communication* to the soul of all the blessings for which God has set us apart; and the manifestation of the Holy One himself, *not only to us but in us*. For *these* see Ezek. xxxvi. 23—“I will *sanctify my great name*, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when *I shall be sanctified in their eyes*.” And then we have the following seven-fold communication of blessings for which they were sanctified, and in the bestowing of which the Lord is to be sanctified in them. (1) “I will *take you* from among the heathen, and *gather you* out of all countries, and will *bring you into your own land*.” (2) “Then will I

sprinkle clean water upon you, and *ye shall be* from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, and cleanse you." (3) "A *new heart* also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you;" (5) "*take away the stony heart* out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh." (6) "I *will put my* within you, (7) and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Putting these passages together we have the full meaning of sanctification; viz., the setting apart of certain people for blessing, and the manifestation of Jehovah to them in the communication of all those blessings for which they were set apart, or sanctified.

In the New Testament we might refer to many passages, but one will suffice, it contains the whole matter. (Jude 1.) Here the Apostle addresses the people of God as those "that are *sanctified* by God the Father, and *preserved* in Jesus Christ, and *called*." To observe, how the three Persons of the Trinity are represented as being engaged in the sanctification of God's people; the Father sanctifying them, the Son in whom they are preserved, and as it is implied, the Holy Spirit by whom they are called; thus in this one passage we have the setting apart, the manifestation of the blessing, and the communication; "called," through the Spirit, his eternal glory by that Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they are preserved by the Father who hath sanctified them. If this be so, what a rare and perfect work must be the sanctification of the Lord's people. The foundation of it is in the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ and our union with him. The manifestation and communication of

ing through "the truth," and "the belief of the
 I," and the power by which it is consummated,
 Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us."

As Satan corrupts us through falsehoods, our God
 sanctifies us through "the truth." Observe, it is not
 through impressions, not through excitement, not
 through revelations or visions, nor through *sacraments*
 (alas! too many teach), nor yet through church
 ministrations, we are sanctified. "Sanctify them through
 truth: thy word is truth."

Now, *why* is "the truth" the instrument? We may
 give several reasons. It is through the truth the love
 of God is revealed and shed abroad in our hearts; love
 is the sanctifying principle, "We love him, because he first
 loved us;" love is a constraining principle, "the love of
 God constrains us." The truth is the instrument by
 which the Holy Ghost is ministered to the soul, there-
 in 2 Cor. iii. 8, the gospel is called "the ministra-
 tion of the Spirit," because it is the means whereby the
 Spirit is ministered. In Gal. iii. 2, the Apostle asks,
 "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by
 the hearing of faith?" implying that they did not re-
 ceive the Spirit by the works of the law, but that *they*
 receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith, that is, the
 gospel. Again, "the truth" is the means of our sanctifi-
 cation, because faith which "purifies the heart" is pro-
 duced by the truth; "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing
 by the word of God." Again, "the truth" supplies hope.
 Col. i. 5, it is thus described, "the hope which is laid
 out for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the
 word of the truth of the gospel." And you forget not

1 John iii. 3, where we are taught, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as pure." Again, the truth is the means whereby the promises of God are bestowed (see the Apostle's argument in 2 Cor. vii. 1): "Having *therefore* these promises dearly beloved, *let us cleanse* ourselves from all unrighteousness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." There is another interesting passage upon this subject in 1 Pet. i. 22, where this principle is also laid down, "Seeing ye have purified your souls by *obeying the truth through the Spirit.*"

Thus you perceive we read of sanctification in two senses. In one respect our sanctification is complete, that nothing can be added to it or taken from it. It is already effected for *all* God's believing people through the one offering of the Lord Jesus Christ, once for all. He is our sanctification as truly as he is our justification and as completely. "But of him are ye in Christ who of God is made unto us, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."—(1 Cor. i. 30.) Keep this fundamental truth always present in your minds, dear brethren; we are complete in Christ before our God, both as sanctified ones, and as justified ones, if we have come to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. In another respect it is progressive, and commonly called progressive sanctification. But, in reality, this sanctification is the fruit of faith, and its manifestation and development in the heart will evermore be according to our faith, and in the degree in which our mind, affections, our hopes, and desires are experimentally conversant with the gospel of the grace of God, and

the Lord Jesus Christ into our hearts and live day
 upon his fulness, through the power and indwell-
 of the Holy Ghost. In Titus ii. 11-14, the Apostle
 —“the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath
 red to all men, teaching us”—that grace which
 s apart in Christ, the grace that loves us, pardons
 cepts us, adopts us, that fills us with all the fulness
 od in Christ—what doth it teach us? (This is a
 practical matter.) “Teaching us, that, denying
 illness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,
 ously, and godly, in this present world; looking
 at blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the
 e: God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave
 elf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,
 purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of
 works.” Sanctification as it respects our persons,
 rist, is absolutely and everlastingly complete: as
 Apostle writes in Col. ii. 10, “Ye are complete in
 which is the head of all principality and power.”
 he second aspect of sanctification has reference to
 effect of the truth upon our minds, and hearts, and
 ruct; and to this the Apostle directs our attention in
 iv. 23, where he fully opens out the subject—“Be
 ved in the spirit of your mind,”—that is, by the
 nce and operation of the truth,—“and *put on the*
man, which after God is created in righteousness
 true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak
 y man truth with his neighbour: for we are members
 of another.” And he then proceeds to enforce prac-
 duties, *which are in fact fruits of faith*, and manifesta-
 s of our union with him who is “Holiness to the Lord.”

When He prayed thus, "Sanctify them through truth," I think there can be no doubt our Lord referred specially to the particular truths he had just revealed to them, such as "They are thine," "Thou gavest them to me," "I am glorified in them," "They are not of the world," even as I am not of the world." Speaking on a former occasion, and in reference to the union between himself and them, he said, "*Now are ye clean, through the truth which I have spoken unto you*" (John xv. 3); and afterwards, in the nineteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter, he declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." They were clean in him; but he earnestly prayed that this fact of their complete sanctification in himself might be so fully and constantly realized in their hearts and actions; that it might be a practical power in their lives and conversation, influencing them for happiness, holiness, and for usefulness. He had spoken of the truth "as his Father's word"—"The words which thou gavest to me," "The words which I have given them," "The word which they had received," the word the account of which "the world hath hated them"—he now asks that it may be the means of their sanctification.

"Thy word is truth." It is difficult to say whether by this expression our Lord means himself, or the truth which revealed him. We have in this gospel "the Word was God," and "the word of God." Probably in his prayer our Lord refers to his testimony; but it certainly conveys to us by the language he uses, that the Bible of God is as true as the God of the Bible, and

"word of God" is to us in importance only less than "Word" himself. Would that the Scriptures were read by us more in this light. See a remarkable passage in Acts xx. 32, bearing on this subject: "Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Observe how remarkably the God of the word, and the word of God, are identified in that passage. All the glory there attributed to the word of his grace might as truly be predicated of God himself as it is of the word that reveals him. Little do we realize how much we owe to the written word of God. If we are *begotten* of God's family, it is "by the word of God which abideth for ever;" if our souls are *quicken*ed, "the word hath quickened me;" if we are to *grow*, we "desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may thereby;" if we are to be *fed*, "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live;" if our souls are *light*ened, "the entrance of thy words giveth light;" if our hearts are *comfort*ed, it must be "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures;" if we are *renew*ed, we are renewed in knowledge;" if we are to be *establi*shed, it must be in the truth; if we are to be *conquer*ors, we overcome by the word of the testimony (Rev. xii. 11); if we are to be *sancti*fied, "Sanctify them through thy word."

Dear brethren, we aim at far too low a standard in this respect. The Spirit of God sets before us a very high calling in the matter of sanctification. Just give

your attention to one or two passages. See Col. i. addressed as you perceive in verse 2, "to the *sanctified ones*,"—"for this cause we also, since th we heard it,"—they had received the truth, this it which he alludes—"do not cease to pray for you to desire that ye might *be filled* with the knowlec his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understand Observe the abundant measure, not only in wisdom "in *all* wisdom and spiritual understanding; th might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleas not merely so as to please him, but unto *all* ple "being fruitful in *every good work*"—wonderful lang —"and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengt with *all* might, according to his glorious power"— a measure!—"unto *all* patience and long-suffering joyfulness: giving thanks unto the Father, which *made us meet* to be partakers of the inheritance o saints in light." You observe the starting point,—s that the Father "*hath* made us meet to be partake the inheritance of the saints in light," and ther pathway,—"*in the knowledge of his will;*" and a "*increasing in the knowledge of God.*" Thus it i walk with him thankfully, and rejoicingly, in the fruitful path here described for us, and which sh brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Al remember it is because of his complete sanctificati Christ, that there is anything like a fruitful walk i believer on earth, and that just as *his faith appreh his calling, he will practically walk worthy of it.*

I Thess. v. 23, 24: "The very God of peace san you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and

body"—every department of your being—"be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." You observe it is not a question. "*He will do it.*" The Lord's prayer had gone up before his Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth." Observe the new revelation of God which constitutes the ground of the apostle's petition, and the assurance of his hope,—"*The God of peace.*" Yes, "our peace is made," the veil has gone in, we stand "accepted in the beloved" before the throne, "complete in him." Our God is the God of peace, and just as our faith apprehends this we must be practical in our walk. You find a similar promise in Heb. xiii. 20-21, "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *make you perfect* in every good work, to do his will, *working in you* that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." See the benediction laid, "*the God of peace.*" Oh! for faith to apprehend these things, and to know that our peace is made, then our walk will be in fellowship and communion with him who made it.

Now *why* is the Lord so earnest about the sanctification of his people? I will mention a few reasons. It is written in Heb. xii. 14, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Observe the connection between peace and holiness. Again we cannot follow either peace or holiness with men if we are not in the enjoyment of peace and holiness with God: one is the fruit of the

other; but he adds, "without which no man *shall see the Lord.*" There are two most important senses in which this statement is true. It is absolutely true if we are not "in Christ," "complete in him," "sanctified through the offering of his body once for all," we never "see the Lord." This is positively and absolutely true. It is also practically true that, as Christians, we shall have no fellowship, no communion, no vision of the Lord, nothing of the light of his countenance falling upon our souls, nothing of the gladness of the joy which many of his children know, if our walk is a loose and an unholy walk, a careless walk. The way to see God on earth is to follow holiness. It is not because you follow holiness on earth that you are accepted of Christ; do not suppose *that*. You are accepted of Christ *because* you follow holiness. You are accepted of Christ *because* you are *beloved!* It is because of the offering of his dear body once for all, we are evermore sanctified before God; this is an holiness *without* us altogether; existing in him who is made unto us our sanctification; but we would be happy, if we would walk in the light and have the enjoyment of fellowship with God, if we wish to see his face, and to have our weary way cheered and strengthened with the light of his countenance, we must follow holiness, for without "holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Again, holiness is *communion* with God. In 2 Cor. xiii. 14, you have the familiar passage, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." As brethren, we think far more of our safety than we do of our communion. This is the great mistake we make.

Again, the Lord is thus earnest concerning the sanctification

son of his people, because *their holiness is their happiness*. "Be ye holy for I am holy." When shall we learn this, and that sin is not more the enemy of holiness than it is the enemy of the poor soul that commits it? Holiness is happiness.

Again, *holiness is fruitfulness*. In Gal. v. 22, the fruits of the Spirit are summed up: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Lastly, *holiness is our meetness for the inheritance of the kingdom to which we are going*. In every sense, "without holiness" no man can enter it. What would you say if, while I professed to be about to enter a neighbouring kingdom to spend all my life there, you knew me, nevertheless, perfectly careless with regard to learning the laws and customs of that kingdom, ignorant of its language, and unwilling to make myself acquainted with any of the inhabitants of that kingdom who might be sojourning in my neighbourhood? What would you think, moreover, if you observed that the more I knew of its language the less I liked it, and the more I knew of its inhabitants the more I avoided them? Would you not say that I was quite beside myself in professing to anticipate any pleasure in spending the rest of my life in that kingdom? Or, suppose you knew me to be a criminal condemned to die, and that all my thoughts and anxieties were engrossed in the effort to obtain a reprieve—at the same time quite overlooking the fact that I had a mortal disease, and never thinking of sending for a physician, so that, in all probability, the very day that a reprieve might arrive I would die of my disease,—

Would you not say, what folly what madness? Yet is just in this way we deal with the things of eternity. We all profess to hope we shall go to heaven at last, we all profess to be anxious about the pardon of our sins; but many seem to forget altogether that with holiness we would not be happy in heaven itself.

The subject is very solemn, and tempts one to enlarge; but I conclude with a few counsels. (1) Think of God, for any desire after holiness you may possess. This question of our personal practical sanctification is very important, although it be an humbling one, but if you have any real desire to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, and any real shrinking from the things which are contrary to him, thank God for it. (2) Earnestly desire the *highest* attainments in the way of personal consecration to God. Remember the high standard set before you, and plead the promise that God "is faithful who also will do it." (3) Beware of self-exaltation. I believe the Lord does not allow us *to feel* very much of the progress of our sanctification, lest we should give it to self-exaltation. A very material part of our practical holiness consists in humility. You know it is written (Isa. lvii. 15), "I dwell in the high and holy place, but I will be reconciled to him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Think of the Lord, the Holy One, acknowledges a close connection between his dwelling-place in the atmosphere of holiness, and his dwelling-place in the atmosphere of humility. Do not forget *that*. (4) A main part of our sanctification here on earth, is carried on, and perfected in learning our sinfulness, experiencing our nothingness, realizing our corruption, our misery, and our ruin.

ie we are left here very much in order that we may these things. But, when he brings us up to God, we shall learn the fulness of his grace in teaching when he shews us the glory to which he has reed us, we shall best know, in the dark contrast of we have been here, how much we owe to grace, and precious was the blood that saved us. I wonder hat it is written, they cease not to sing, "for thou slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." now, dear friends, if God's word is truth, and there-truth because *it is* his word, prize it, read it, love it, it in your heart that you may not sin against him. l may those who know it have grace to proclaim it.

29

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."—JOHN xvii. 18, 19.

WITH these words our Lord closes the second portion his prayer. The first part, as you will remember om verse 1 to 6), had reference exclusively to *himself*. ne second part (from verse 6 to 20) has reference to s Apostles.

We must, therefore, regard the Apostles, as the Lord idently regards them, in a two-fold character. First, s men divinely and specially appointed and commis- oned for an extraordinary and peculiar office and work,

for which they were also divinely qualified. In 2
 xii. 12, we are told of the *signs* of an Apostle, "truly
 signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in
 patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty de
 The Lord conferred the Holy Ghost upon the Apo
 in a peculiar manner, and for a peculiar purpose.
 were enabled to work miracles, they were enable
 discern spirits, they were enabled authoritatively to
 declare the forgiveness of sins, they were endowed
 extraordinary gifts qualifying them for the special
 sion upon which the Lord sent them, to be his witne
 to the ends of the earth. The pretensions of some
 to be the successors of the Apostles, seems to be a p
 ful and unscriptural assumption, if it is not an a
 blasphemy. For the peculiar work to which the L
 appointed his Apostles, he had in a special man
 given them his word, so they were inspired men.
 special manner he bestowed upon them his Spirit
 that they had not only extraordinary divine illum
 tion, but they had also extraordinary divine po
 Now in his prayer for them there were two mat
 about which the Lord expresses himself anxious.
Their preservation, for much depended upon it.
 had given them his word, and they were to be his
 bassadors to the sons and daughters of men, they v
 to bear his testimony to the ends of the earth, and th
 fore, their preservation in the world was all-import
 "Holy Father, keep them." And (2) *their sanctifica*
 that they might be holy vessels filled with truth. "Se
 tify them through thy truth."

But secondly, our Lord evidently regards the Apost

another point of view, even as simple believers, like ourselves. They had the same corrupt nature that we have; they were exposed to the same temptations that we are; they were opposed by the same adversaries—the world, the flesh, and the devil; they had no more righteousness of their own than we have; they had no more power to obtain the pardon of sin by their own merits than we have; they were as weak in themselves, as helpless as we are; they were as dependent upon the grace and mercy of their heavenly Father as we are; they were as poor and needy as we are; but they knew it far better than we do, because of the greater amount of grace and spiritual light bestowed upon them.

Thus the Lord's prayer to his Father concerning them enters into their need in *both* characters—as Apostles, and as individual believers; and in embracing them, his prayer manifestly includes all the family of Adam, and all the circumstances of each in all ages of the world's history; and that this is so may be easily proved. When he said to them "In the world ye shall have tribulation," did he mean his Apostles only? Or again, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace" (chap. xvi. 33), did he mean his Apostles only? Thank God many a soul taught by his Spirit, and comforted in his love can testify to the contrary. So here, when he prays "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world; and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth," it is evident that while he refers to his Apostles specially, yet not ex-

clusively, he also comprehends in his prayer all who in subsequent ages of the church shall at any time believe upon him through their word. In this point of view how beautiful the passage is, and how wonderful the truth it contains. Here are two arguments into which all the others from verse 6 seem to flow as streams into an ocean. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world; and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." I propose to confine our attention at present to the first of these verses only.

Observe, our blessed Lord makes three all-important statements.

I. "Thou hast sent me into the world."

II. "I have sent them into the world."

III. He speaks of a resemblance—a likeness between the Father's sending him into the world, and his sending his dear people into the world. "As thou hast sent me into the world even so have I also sent them into the world."

I. The first statement is in itself an immense subject—Christ sent into the world. What deep teaching a simple sentence conveys. Let me call your attention to a few only of the great subjects connected with it.

1. His *pre-existence*, "Thou hast sent me into the world." You remember in Prov. viii., under the name of Wisdom, we read, that long before the Lord Jesus Christ was manifested in human nature, he was the God in Divine purpose, he was mediator in the covenant of grace long before he was incarnate, and manifested himself as mediator in the fulness of time; he there speaks of

as delighting in the sons of men before the world
 So here his words imply his pre-existence, "Thou
 sent me into the world."

2. He came not of his own accord ; "Neither came I
 myself, but he sent me" (John viii. 42). Our Lord
 did to trace his own mission to the Father's love for
 people, and to point out that the fact of his presence
 was but the pledge and seal of that Father's ever-
 lasting love,—“My meat is to do the will of him that
 sent me, and to finish *his work*.” “Wist ye not that I
 am not here to do my Father's business?” and when he was
 about to return, “Now I go my way to him that sent
 me.” “God so loved the world that he gave his only
 begotten Son,” God sent him into the world that we might
 live through him.

3. Christ was sent—*commissioned*. The Apostle John
 (1 Epist. iv. 14) says, “We have seen, and do testify,
 that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of
 the world.”

4. Sent and *qualified*. His qualification was that
 the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily ;” the
 Holy Ghost without measure was upon him to anoint
 him ; “all power in heaven and earth” was bestowed
 upon him and “authority to execute judgment also be-
 cause he was the *Son of man*.”

5. Christ was sent into the world *officially*. He was
 sent to be the Prophet, the Priest, and the King. “The
 Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a *Prophet* like unto
 me, unto him shall ye hearken.”—(Deut. xviii. 15.) “The
 Lord has sworn and will not repent, thou art a *Priest*
 ever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Ps. cx. 4.)

Yet have I set set my *King* on my holy hill of Zion
(Ps. ii. 6.)

6. Christ being sent officially, implies that he was *responsible* for the discharge of the office he had accepted; therefore all that can be done for us by a priest he will do, all that can be done for us by a prophet he will accomplish, all that can be done for us by a king we may depend upon being done. You remember how he loved to use language implying his responsibility for the discharge of his office. "I *must* work the work of him that sent me." Observe, not I will, but I *must*. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; these also I *must* bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." You remember, "So *must* the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." "All things *must* be fulfilled . . . concerning me." It is a very precious truth, that when the Lord was sent into the world officially to be the Saviour of sinners, he felt his responsibility to discharge the office he had undertaken. If "Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant," how much more our glorious "Christ as a Son." He is responsible to receive the poor sinner who comes to him,—for this purpose he was sent; he is responsible to wash in his blood the poor guilty soul that appeals to him,—for this purpose was he sent. As well might Aaron discharge his office faithfully whilst rejecting an Israelite as Christ in rejecting a sinner.

7. But from *whence* was he sent? We read he was "in the bosom of the Father;" he was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Such he was, such was the scene in which he dwelt, and from whence he was sent.

8. *Whither* was he sent? Not to the Jewish temple to be worshipped, but into the world: "Thou hast sent me into the world;" not into the circle of a family which could recognise him and love him, and sit at his feet, and adore the grace that brought him down; but into the world that hated him; not into the society of angels and archangels, but into the world; not even into the solitudes of the wilderness, but into the busy turmoil of the world: "Thou hast sent me into the world," the world where Satan had triumphed, the world where sin had reigned, the world where Jehovah's law had been outraged.

9. With what *object* was he sent? "He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil," to "put away sin," to "magnify the law" man had broken, and to "abolish death." You remember his own statement (Luke iv. 18-19),—"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The mission of Christ is the greatest *fact* in our world's history. The creation was as nothing to this. It was for the greatest *cause* he was sent—even the glory of God; for the greatest *object*—the salvation of sinners; and for the greatest *results*—even that he might subdue all things to himself. *He only* could do it, therefore he was sent; he could do it *only* in our nature, therefore he

assumed it ; he could do it *in the world* only, therefore dwelt amongst us. Here God's law had been tramped upon ; here, therefore, he magnified it, both by his life and by his death.

II. The second statement is, "I have sent *them* into the world." The mere mention of this fact in association with the former one is beyond anything I can express in the way of grace. That he should mention them together, "Thou hast sent me, and I have sent them," is something for faith and hope to rest upon. We have seen that Christ was sent into the world. Mark the parallel.

1. We too are sent : and "we are not our own," we are not here upon our own business, or at our own charges. We are sent as Christ's chosen ones, as Christ's redeemed ones, as Christ's adopted ones "into the world."

2. We are not here of our own choice, we did not select our position for ourselves, *he selected it for us*. We find comfort to know this. He who sent us into the world could remove us from it in a moment. Having revealed his love to us, having washed us in his blood, and possessed us by his Spirit, he might at once take us where no temptation can assail us, no sin can sully us, and no tear can dim our eye nor sorrow press down our spirit yet he doth it not, it is not his will. He says (in verse 11), "These are in the world, and I come to thee," and leave them behind. He says (verse 15), "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." Here he goes further, and positively asserts, "I have sent them into the world:" not into the paradise of God, where

tree of life puts forth its leaves for the healing of nations, but "into the world," where the serpent is in the foliage of the tree of knowledge: not into the Father's home, where there is "bread enough and spare," but "into the world:" not into the society of angels, but into the company of the world: not into the home of purity and love, but into the den of impurity and evil, not even into solitude and retirement, not into peace and into calm, but "into the world." My brethren, the world is the school where God's children are taught by the Holy Ghost to know themselves, and to learn what sin is. It is in the world's disappointments, in the world's follies, in the world's temptations, in the world's tribulations, in the world's snares, in the world's sinfulness, and in the world's falsehood, we are to learn the corruption of our own hearts, the vanity of the creature, the bankruptcy of self, and the malice of the devil. Here we learn to hate ourselves, and to distrust ourselves, and in the realization of the precious, precious blood which has washed us, and bought us, to hate ourselves all the more, while we long for the time when, with clear vision, no clouds between, we shall see him "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."

Lastly. It is in the world we can best learn to live by faith, to live in hope, and be influenced by a love that comes down to us in our difficulties, pardons our sins, and pledges to us the victory. It is very easy to learn abstract truths, my brethren; but if ever we are to learn truth profitably, we must learn it experimentally. I might tell you of a beautiful well, I had heard of, spark-

ling with its living waters, gladdening the region where in God's providence it was placed, but you might say to me, "when I was weary and faint, I *drank of that well* how much more then, you would appreciate its value than I could. I might tell you of a friend, amiable and generous, wealthy and sympathizing, and that he is all and more than I could describe, every one said so who knew him, but you might tell me, "when I was needy and poor and sick, he visited me, and comforted me, and relieved me, and nursed me;" surely, you would know *far more* of him than I did. We are left in the world not only to hear of the Lord Jesus Christ as the well of life and as the friend of sinners, but we are here to *drink the waters* and to *prove his love*.

III. The last statement in the text is wonderful—it passeth knowledge. The Lord speaks of the analogy and resemblance between the Father's sending him into the world, and his sending his poor needy people into the world; for he says, "*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*" Truly our blessed Lord here opens out his whole heart to them as he had to his Father. He now pleads to them what he had already said to them in the fifteenth chapter of this gospel (verse 9): "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." So now he tells the Father, that even as he had sent his loved *One*, he was sending his loved *ones*; and that as the Father sent him, his loved *One*, *into the world*—the weary world, the tempting world, the world of tribulation and difficulty,—so he was sending his loved ones into

place. He reminds the Father with what object he himself was sent into the world, even for his own glory; and now he tells the Father that it was for the same object he was sending his loved ones into the world, that there they might learn to know his name, to prove his love, and to triumph in his salvation. Moreover, he reminds the Father that as he came down here to be dependent upon his Father's bounty, to live a life of dependence on him; so he was sending his loved ones into the world, and that they were needy, they were dependent, they had nothing but what he would give them, O Father keep them, — "Sanctify them through thy truth;" for, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

Give me your attention while I try to draw a parallel between these two missions. The Father sent Christ into the world to be his servant; Christ sends his dear people into the world to be his servants. The Father sent Christ into the world to magnify the law, and he did it in the way in which only *he* could do it; he sends his people into the world to magnify the law. You may say to me "How can we magnify the law?" See that poor sinner bowed down to the earth in the very dust under the sense of his own corruption, and wanderings, and inconsistencies. Hear him groan, see him water his couch with tears. Why is it? Because he knows he has dishonoured God by breaking the law. Oh! how he magnifies that law, he cannot fulfil it as Christ did, he cannot atone for the sin committed against it as Christ did, nor does he need to do so, but God's law is magnified in his heart half-broken under the consciousness of the

sad disparity between his own conduct, and God's and word. Christ was sent into the world to *reveal* the Father; and Christ sent his people into the world that they might learn in the face of Jesus Christ to *know* the Father. Christ was sent into the world to be the truth, and the life, and Christ sends his people into the world that they may walk in that way, enjoy that life, and live upon that truth. Christ was sent into the world to overcome the world; even so Christ sends his people into the world to overcome the world, and he says, "this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith." Christ was sent into the world to be the light of the world; and he sent his people into the world to be the light of the world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Christ was sent into the world to be a witness against the world, and so are his people sent by him into the world to be witnesses against the world. Oh! witness against the world, its sins, its follies, its inconsistencies, its God-dishonouring ways, and customs; do it with your lips, do not be ashamed; do it in your hearts; manifest it in your lives. For this cause ye are sent.

Christ was sent into the world and *qualified* for his mission. Do you think he will leave his poor people sent into the same world, *unqualified* for their mission? No, brethren, not so long as there is a Holy Ghost, not so long as there is power in the hands of the Father, unto whom all power in heaven and earth is committed; not so long as there is the fulness dwelling in him, out of which his people shall receive "grace and

ce." And lastly, Christ's mission into the world ended in victory—though sin and law, and death, and all opposed it, it ended in victory; so it shall be with his people: he sent them not into the world to be defeated, but that sin, and the world, and the devil (though they confederate, and with strong hand) should have the ultimate advantage, but that they might be made more than conquerors through him that loved" them. No angel in heaven was ever sent into the world upon such a mission as that upon which poor sinners who believe in Jesus are sent. It is written "as he is so are we in this world." As he is conqueror on the throne above, so are we "more than conquerors through him that loved us." And it is our duty, and it is our privilege as believers to know, that he who sent us into the world is able to protect us while we are in the world, able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy," and meantime to sanctify us with the truth which tells us of the love, and of the grace of the Saviour.

Lord Jesus, give us thyself in our hearts, thy faith, thy love: thyself—the expulsive principle which deposes all other lords; thy love—the constraining principle which consecrates our lives; thy faith—the all-conquering principle which overcomes the world into which thou hast sent us.

“*And for their sakes I sanctify myself.*”—JOHN XVII.

OUR Lord could not say more, do more, plead more, love more.

Already he had prayed, “Sanctify them through truth,” already he pleaded (1) The fact of their heavenly origin—“they are not of the world;” (2) Their need “by reason of the dangers to which they would be exposed to in the world;” and (3) His object in sending them there. “As thou hast sent me.” Now, again he pleads, “Sanctify them.” (4) “For their sake I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” There are other subjects upon which the word of God is silent (and even the silence of Scripture is instructive). There are other subjects of which the whole of Scripture, from beginning to end, seems to treat. If our minds were rightly ordered, we should never desire the knowledge of any matter which our heavenly Father has been pleased to withhold from us; and on the other hand, we would receive into our inmost hearts and prize beyond all earthly considerations, every truth which he is pleased to reveal for our guidance, warning, comfort, or for his own glory. Now, there are few subjects on which the Spirit of God dwells more frequently, and none seems more important than—*the sanctification of the Lord’s people.* It pervades the whole Bible, but so far as I am aware the weightiest passage on the subject is our text. There is a depth and fulness here which can never be fully expressed, even in heaven. Observe our Lord not only lays the foundation of his people’s

sanctification in the reality of his own, but he also estimates the fulness and completeness of it by the same standard : “ For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”

Here are four all-important matters revealed.

I. What our blessed Lord did—“ I sanctify myself.”

II. Why he did it—“ for their sakes.”

III. With what object he did it—“ that they might be sanctified.”

IV. The means—“ through the truth.”

I. “ I sanctify myself.” What does he mean? He is “ The Holy One of God,” “ Holiness unto the Lord,” “ The Most Holy ;” it is utterly inconceivable that he could become *more holy* or *more sanctified* than he was, yet he says, “ I sanctify myself.” His use of the expression throws great light upon what the Spirit of God means by sanctification in Scripture, for certainly this passage is the key to the whole. The meaning here evidently is, I dedicate, I consecrate, I set apart my *whole self*,—my Person, Godhead and Manhood, Soul and Body. I consecrate all mine offices—If I be a Priest, if I be a Prophet, if I be a King—I set them apart, I wholly dedicate and consecrate all my fulness of grace and glory, all my righteousness, all mine interests, my very existence, I sanctify for the purpose and object for which I plead, “ whatsoever I am ; and I am thy fellow, Lord God of Hosts ! whatever my resources ; (and “ it pleased the Father that in him should his fulness dwell ;”) whatever the merit of my blood, and

the glory of my name, I absolutely dedicate: I lay down *all* upon the altar of divine and unchangeable love that *may be all, do all, suffer all, merit all* my people need, and, that I may *pay* all my people owe;" "for thy sakes I sanctify myself." Oh! what did he hold back? Nothing! His was a complete surrender; it was an absolute devoting of himself, all that he was as Son of God, all that he was as Son of man, all that he was as mediator, all his fulness, and all his service, his time, his care, his thought, his very life itself he consecrated and set apart, that he might be the sanctification of his people.

You perceive that this is the crowning petition of the many he had presented on behalf of his disciples, and well he knew in what light his Father would regard the offering, on the ground of which he pleaded. We cannot think too highly of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ; we cannot rest too fully on the dignity of the offerer, the worth of the offering, or the benefits that flow from it. We cannot make too much of the blood, or dwell too securely under its protection. The blood of Christ has a *double* efficacy: it is the atonement for sin, and it is the sanctification of the sinner on whose heart it is sprinkled by faith. "We are justified by his blood" (Rom. v. 9), and we are sanctified by the blood (Heb. xiii. 12). This one offering of himself included sin-offering, burnt-offering, meat-offering, peace-offering, *all in one*. His blood cleanseth "from all sin," both from the *guilt* of sin, and from the *filth* of sin, from every kind and degree of sin, everything contained in sin, its pollution, its demerit, and its consequences.

ere the blood of the Lamb is sprinkled the Holy Spirit descends, and dwells there for ever.

I would we might always remember, to the comfort of our souls, that when the Lord Jesus Christ hung upon the cross of Calvary, as an offering for sin, all the iniquities, transgressions, and sins of the church of God, whether past, present, or future, were laid upon him. It is written, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us" and all were future then! Nay, they were conferred upon his blessed head, even as "Aaron confessed the iniquity, the transgressions, and the sins of Israel, putting them on the head of the scape-goat." Now, if it was so, and the blood then shed availed to blot out the mighty *whole*; if our substitute "rose again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant; if he ascended into heaven by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. ix. 12); if he thereupon sat down upon the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool; if, I say, the blood of the everlasting covenant was sufficient to open a way for the responsible representative of *all* his people—how much more is it sufficient for you and me, how much more is it sufficient to discharge, and blot out all the iniquities, transgressions, and sins of any individual sinner who comes to the Father by him, pleading the merit and the acceptance of his blood! If it was sufficient to free *him* from all responsibility concerning it, on whose head the *accumulated whole was laid*—how much more in the case of the sinner, who, after all, is but a member in the body!

Once again observe, it was altogether his *own* act—*“I sanctify myself.”* He had the right and the authority; he had the power; and he had love enough to do it—*“I sanctify myself.”* No one dictated it to him; no power moved him, no prayer invited him, no welcome awaited him, when he came to put away our sin by his sacrifice of himself, no sympathy greeted him on behalf of those for whom he came to die. *“Thy time was the time of love,”* when *“He sanctified himself.”*

This then seems to be the meaning of *“I sanctify myself.”* It was his setting himself apart—all that he had, all that he could at any time command—devoting himself, dedicating himself, and delighting to do so, for the persons and for the object he had in view.

II. *“For their sakes!”* Every one has an object, and motive for what he does; here we have our Lord distinctly stating in the hearing of his disciples what was *his* aim, and what was his motive for what he did—*“For their sakes I sanctify myself.”* The great truth expressed here is the amazing and transforming fact of the *personal love* of our Lord Jesus Christ to his people; first for his disciples, and, as in the reverse, *“for all who shall believe on him through the word”*—his infinite delight and complacency in them, and that he had no greater joy than to claim them as his portion, and lay out his fulness for their supply; a deeper wish than to be *for them* to God, all he required of them; and from God *to them*, all that they needed from him.

For their sakes *“this expression of personal love”*

his people runs through the whole account of the Lord's work and mission." "Ye know," says the Apostle, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet *for our sakes* he became poor;" "All things," saith he in another place, "are *for your sakes*." So here *for their sakes*," "to supply all their need out of my own fulness, to make my strength perfect in their weakness, to be the fountain-head of their life, to be their light, and their joy, to be made unto them wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, to be 'a wall of fire round about them,' so that no evil may befall them, to be the glory in the midst of them, so that every blessing may be with them, that they may be kept from falling, and presented faultless before the presence of my glory with exceeding joy, that they may lack nothing that is good for time or for eternity, in life or in death, but that they may evermore be filled with all the fulness of God, and kept for me and the Father for ever, 'I sanctify myself.'"

"For their sakes," and *for their sins*: we read in Gal. i. 4, he "gave himself for our sins," that we might be forgiven, that every trespass might be blotted out and discharged; and not only forgiven, but that we might be "justified from all things;" and not only justified, but that we might be adopted, made sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; and not only adopted but "sanctified;" not only delivered from destruction, but exalted to holiness; not only saved from hell, but brought to heaven; that his glory might not only be "seen *on us*," but that it might be "revealed *in us*." "For their sakes I sanctify myself." Thus our

glorious mediator commits his people into his Father's hands, to be blessed with all blessing according to the Father's own estimate of his dear Son's merit, and the measure of his infinite love for his people.

Surely, here is rest for the soul, here is life and joy and peace. If we are empty, it is not because there is want of fulness in Jesus, or unwillingness to impart it; if we are poor, it is not because there are not "unsearchable riches" in Christ, or love enough to supply them; if we are wandering, it is not because there is not grace in Jesus, and infinite readiness to gather and restore us; if our consciences are accusing us, it is not because there is not the all-atoning blood in Jesus, or the Holy Ghost to apply it. If we lack *anything*, it is not because Jesus is unable or unwilling to do for us "exceeding abundant above all we can ask or think," but because we do not "come to him," we do not "ask him," we do not "trust in him;" for he has truly and unchangeably said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." And his whole object in doing so is, that he may be exclusively *for us*, and that we may come to him, *as we will, when we will, where we will, for what we will*, and never be refused and never be upbraided.

"That they also might be sanctified."—JOHN xvii. 19.

"THAT they also might be sanctified." The word evidently implies that his own sanctification was to be the source, ground, reason, and measure of theirs.

Indeed, we find that in all Jehovah's dealings with people in grace and in glory, the divine rule is to begin with the Lord Jesus Christ; to do unto him and through him, what in his purpose of grace and love he intends to do with us, and thus make him the fountainhead and source of all our blessings. Thus, God in the first instance unites Christ to himself, and then in Christ unites himself to his people, making his union with Christ the ground, reason, and means of his union with us. Thus again, Christ is "the first begotten among many brethren," and then we are begotten in him; Christ is the "most blessed for evermore," and we are blessed in him with all spiritual blessings." First, the Father gave to Christ "to have life in himself," and then he gave us life in him: Christ is first filled with "all the fullness" of God, and then we "of his fulness have received, and grace for grace:" Christ was first manifested and declared to be the Son of the Father, then we in him: Christ crucified for sin, and we "crucified with him:" Christ risen, we "raised up together with him:" Christ more than conqueror, we "more than conquerors through him:" Christ set down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, we "sitting at God's right hand in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus;" the Holy Spirit descending without measure upon him, that as "the anointing oil upon the head of Aaron went down upon his beard even to the skirts of his raiment," so we might, through the anointing of our High Priest, enjoy his blessing and inherit his blessing; and thus it is also in the matter of our sanctification, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified."

Now, as there is a close and inseparable *con-*
tion between the Lord Jesus sanctifying himself, and
the sanctification of his people in him, so there is
analogy also—therefore we must carefully remember
what sense Christ sanctified himself, that we may un-
derstand the nature and character of our own sanctifica-
tion. In a word then, Christ's sanctification of himself con-
sists in this—that whereas it “pleased the Father that in
him should all fulness dwell,” and that whereas as a fact
in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, he
did in his love, and in covenant with the Father and the
Holy Ghost, absolutely and voluntarily dedicate and
separate apart his whole person, his inheritance, his offices,
and very life itself, to be the everlasting portion and supply
for his people's need—their spiritual need, and their
temporal need—and their divine and inexhaustible
dowry for time and for eternity. Therefore, and for the
end, the Lord Jesus Christ is to us God's “unspeakable
gift,” consecrated or sanctified, to be the atonement for
our sins, and our everlasting righteousness; sanctified to
make our peace with God, to procure our adoption, to
bestow on us the Spirit of adoption,—“and if children
then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ
—sanctified to be our inheritance of grace on earth,
and our inheritance of glory in heaven. And it was
with this understanding, and with this object, God the Father
sanctified his Son, and sent him into the world (ch. x. 36);
it was on this understanding, as we gather from the
Saviour's words, he “sanctified himself;” and it was
with this understanding “the Holy Spirit” was upon
anointing him “to preach the gospel to the poor, to la-

broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 18); and therefore it is we find him praying as in the text, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified."

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, his ascension into heaven, his being there enthroned at the right hand of God, and the subsequent descent of the Holy Ghost upon the day of Pentecost, and just so many pledges and acknowledgments on our heavenly Father's part, that the Lord Jesus did not sanctify himself" in vain, but that his offering was accepted, his prayer heard, and his desire fulfilled. A few testimonies of the Spirit of God on this point will be sufficient, and we select them out of many. See Heb. x. 10, "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." See also 1 Cor. vi. 11, where, having given a list of some of the vilest crimes of which humanity is capable, he says, "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, that ye are sanctified, but ye are justified *in the name* of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Keeping these texts in view, we learn in the first place, that the sanctification of the people of God is *complete* without any reference to their own attainments, even the degree of their faith. The Apostles speak of believers at Corinth, and there were many degrees of truth and of spiritual attainments amongst them. Our sanctification in Christ is therefore complete without any reference to the *degree* of faith (supposing us to be

really believers in the Lord Jesus Christ), and it is eternally and lastingly complete. Moreover, it is also evident from these texts, that it is through the offering and sacrifice of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ that we are thus sanctified. Our sanctification consists in fellowship with him, and in the participation and enjoyment of all that he is. In 1 Cor. i. 30, this truth is stated in so many words, "all things are of him"—that is of God the Father—"are ye *in* Christ Jesus" (the foundation of all our blessing consists in being in Christ Jesus. The moment we receive God's testimony concerning Christ Jesus this union is consummated, and our standing henceforth is in Christ Jesus, and "neither death nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come, can separate us,") "who of God is made manifest to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he will glorify himself in his people, let him glory in the Lord," again, John i. v. compared with v. 16, tells us the same truth—"as many as *received him*, to them gave he power to become *the sons of God*, even to them that *believe on his name*." Thus believing on his name, receiving him, and being his child of God, are synonymous terms. When a man believes on Jesus he receives Jesus, and receiving Jesus the Lord Jesus Christ he is a child of God. Then verse 6 "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," first *himself* and then his *fulness*. This is the true ground of the believer's sanctification. Heb. ii. 13 is also a very remarkable scripture: "Both he sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one—they have one father—God; they have one life—divine life; they have one strength—Jehovah's strength."

made perfect in their weakness ; they have one grace, it is *all* grace ; and they have one glory—"the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one,"—"for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." The life of sanctification is, therefore, plainly a life of faith, a faith that lays hold upon the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ sanctified himself, in order that those who believed on him might be sanctified also ; and thus the faith that lays hold upon him for sanctification before God, lives on him for practical sanctification day by day, "Lord increase our faith !"

It follows therefore that, according to the purpose and will of him with whom we have to do, the "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," we, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be more sanctified than we are. Oh ! that we might drink into this great fact. The reason is a very simple one, it is because the ground of our sanctification is not anything that we are, anything we have attained unto, or can possibly attain unto, even by faith ; the entire ground of our sanctification in the sight of God consists in what the Lord Jesus Christ *is* and what the Lord Jesus Christ *has done* for us ; thus he expresses himself upon this subject. "For their sake I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified." Neither can we be more dearly loved ; not even in glory shall we be more dear to our heavenly Father than we are now here below, tempest-tossed as we are, and tried and troubled with "fightings without, and fears within." Neither can we be more "perfect" or "accepted" even in glory ; for it is written, "Ye are

complete in him which is the head of all principality and power." Neither can we be made more *meet* for glory than his grace has already made us: the moment we came as poor sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ, and he received him, he "was made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, in the fullest and in the divinest sense thereof, and in the fullest and divinest measure thereof. Yea, "*God hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*" (Col. i. 12). It is just as we receive these things simply, intelligently, and obediently into our minds, our hearts become affected, and "the fruits of faith which are by Jesus Christ" abound in our lives and conversation "to the praise and the glory of God."

Now, as our Lord Jesus Christ's motive in the sacrifice of himself was in order that believers might be sanctified, his object *must* be accomplished and attained, and therefore, as believers in him, our sin is entirely away as if it had never existed—"removed as far as the east is from the west from us,"—in every sense of the word *from us*; for either our sin was laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ, or it was not. Which is true? Either the Lord Jesus Christ made his soul an offering for our sin, that he might make an end of sin, or he did not. Which is true? Either the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, God, in this way, publicly acknowledging that his offering was accepted, that justice was satisfied, the sin atoned for, and blotted out in the precious blood of Christ, or it was not so. Which is true? And if the sin was laid on Jesus, it cannot be laid on the believer, who is identified with him in God's sight.

justice was satisfied by the sacrifice of Christ, justice will never demand the sacrifice of the sinner; if Jesus was raised from the dead because of our justification, who is to condemn us?—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" "For Christ has died, ye have been buried with him by baptism into death, in which he is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Most pressed is the argument of the Apostle upon this subject, in Rom. vi. 4, "We are buried with him by baptism into death." The baptism he speaks of is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, whereby we are united to Jesus in his death and resurrection. The baptism that we perform with water is *the symbol*, the memorial, the illustration of it, God's own blessed ordinance appointed to assure us of the great reality it represents; "We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

A few precious texts upon this subject must now claim our attention, see Heb. xiii. 12, "Jesus . . . that might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." How wonderfully this harmonizes with what he says here, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified." He went forth without the gate, he gave his whole person an atonement upon the cross. Is it any wonder the Holy Ghost could testify for him to the praise of the glory of his name, that his believing people "*are sanctified* by his blood?" Rom. iii. 24, 25, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood : to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." The blood not only sanctified us, but justified us. This is the key-note of the song in heaven (Rev. 5): "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests." Why the blood does everything for us, consecrates us kings and priests, justifies us, sanctifies us, and gives us the victory! (Rev. xii. 11.)

You may remember how even "the shadow of good things to come," in Old Testament times, taught of the complete sanctification of the people of God, through the blood of Jesus. In Lev. xvi. 30, we read, "On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, and cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." It was on the great day of atonement when the sins of all Israel were confessed upon the scape-goat, the blood of his fellow having been presented within the veil as an atonement for them; and if the shadow of the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ effected so much, well argues the Apostle in Heb. ix. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Again, see 2 Cor. v. 21, "God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us" (that is, instead of us), "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." You observe the double transfer of sin transferred to him, his cross being the consequence; his righteousness transferred to us, and the highest s

of eternal glory shall be the consequence, for we read in Heb. i. 3, "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." And it is written, "To him that overcometh"—"will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

From all these Scriptures it is divinely evident that sanctification is the result of *the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ*. And that in Christ Jesus the believer is as pure as the blood of Christ can cleanse him, as righteous as the righteousness of Christ can make him, and as complete as the mediatorial fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ can render him. Truly this is a most important matter, and prayerfully to be learned. Moreover, the work of the Holy Ghost in us, and which is consequent upon the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for us, is not intended to erect an opposition ground of confidence, a rival standard of peace within the soul, but to enlighten our minds, to remove the veil from our hearts, to discover to us what God hath given to us in Christ, that we may "with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, be changed into his same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," (2 Cor. iii. 18) that he may feed us and comfort us with Christ, bring Christ in us, ministering to us his fulness according to our daily need, and teaching us how to draw out Christ's strength for our weakness, and find mercy in him to help in time of need. The Holy Ghost has nothing—I speak with humility, but this is true—the Holy Ghost has *nothing to draw upon* for poor sinners

but the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is here to testify of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to beget and draw forth our faith, and hope, and love, having first created them in our souls, to fix them in Christ, crown them with Christ, satisfy them with Christ, and thus form Christ in our hearts, "the hope of glory." Our Father's purpose concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, that in him all our fulness should dwell; and, therefore, our life, righteousness, sanctification, and peace, are from the heavens; our Father's purpose concerning us, that we should see and know that it is so, and that we should act accordingly; drawing by faith upon the fulness of Christ, till we are "filled with all the fulness of God." Our Father's purpose concerning the Holy Ghost, when he sent him to be our Comforter, was, that he might make these things so plain, clear, and present to us, that "the life we now live in the flesh, we may live henceforth, by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us." The Holy Ghost supplies us with *no ground of confidence apart from Christ*. He sets up no standard for the soul to rest in, or find comfort from, as a rival to him. The mission of the Comforter is not to supply an independent, additional, or even concurrent ground of peace and confidence, but simply to discover to us and give us grace to avail ourselves of the discovery, of what a full salvation is laid up for us in Christ. How many dear children of God are troubled because they look for evidence of the Holy Ghost's presence within them, as a ground for comfort rather than to Christ, who is High Priest before the throne in heaven, and whose blood is indeed their portion and their peace.

Remember the striking and beautiful picture in the Old Testament shadowing forth these things. Compare chapters in Leviticus, chapters 8 and 14.

In Lev. viii. 22-24, we have the consecration of Aaron, Old Testament picture of Christ's sanctifying himself: "He brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram, and slew it"--(No sanctification, through the blood, moreover you will observe it as "Moses and Aaron," "the ram," "the altar," and the other appliances here enumerated to make up the type of Christ sanctifying himself that his people might be sanctified);—"and Moses took of the blood of the ram, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses took of the blood of the ram, and put it upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about." And verse 30, "and Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon their sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." The ear consecrated by that blood to listen to the word of God, the hand consecrated to minister to their wants, and the feet consecrated with the same consecrating blood, thus devoted to go up and down on their business, and to transact their affairs with God for evermore; then the oil was put upon

the blood signifying that the Holy Ghost was bestowed in consequence of that blood being shed and sprinkled.

Now compare chapter 14, "The law of the leper in the day of his cleansing." The leper was a picture of the sinner. There was no healing a leper but by himself, no earthly physician could meet his case. The leper is to be cleansed, *the lamb must be slain*. Observe verses 13-18, "And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place:" (the identification of the lamb with the sin offering and the burnt offering is to be noted, and in the holy place): "for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: most holy. And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, the leper—"and upon the thumb of the right hand, upon the great toe of his right foot: and the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand: and the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord, and of the rest of *the oil* that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, upon the great toe of his right foot, and *upon the tip of the ear of the trespass offering:*" (observe that connection) "and the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord."

Brethren, it is impossible that the truth in our text could have been more distinctly or more beautifully shadowed forth than it is in this Old Testament law "the cleansing of the leper"—the identification of the priest and the leper, and the connection between the sanctification of the one and the other, is most striking. Here then we learn that the true secret of Christian life is identification with Christ, and the practical and consecrated walk of the Christian is as he lives in Christ, as he abides in Christ, and as he lives by Christ. It is only as Christ abides in us we are enabled to do this. You remember his own word in John xv. 4, "Abide in me, and I in you." His abiding in us is the secret power by which we abide in him, and this mutual abiding is carried on by the Holy Ghost the Comforter, who dwelleth in us; whereby Christ abides in us and enables us, attracts us, and seals us into union with and abiding in himself. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, *ye shall abide in him.*"—John ii. 27.

"*Sanctified through the truth.*"—JOHN xvii. 19.

THE appointed *means* through which his people are sanctified—"through the truth."

In Eph. v. 25-27, the Apostle writes, "Christ . . . loved the church, and gave himself for it."—"For their sake I sanctify myself,"—"that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the word*, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Observe the means—"with the washing of water by the word." "*Through the truth*" The word of God is the appointed means for the cleansing and purifying the heart; the washing of water in the ordinance of baptism only represents as in a figure the action of the word (the truth as it is in Jesus) in cleansing the soul. Remember this. Indeed the passage before us is a key to the true meaning of the ordinance.

The text may be interpreted in three ways—

I. "That they . . . might be sanctified through the truth," that is, through the truth just stated, even the great fact—"For their sakes I sanctify myself." It was no mere profession of an interest in his people, it was no mere boast, but a divine fact, he *did* sanctify himself for their sakes. And this great fact, and "truth," was to be the means and source of their sanctification.

II. "Through the truth" may refer to the whole gospel as revealing what the Lord Jesus Christ had done, was doing, and would do for sinners. This was to be the means for engaging his people's affection, quickening their souls, and purifying their hearts to the end of time.

III. Or "through the truth" may be understood, as rendered in the margin, that they might be "truly sanctified."

Let us examine the text in reference to this three-
d interpretation.

I. "That they might be sanctified through the
truth,"—that is, through the great fact that the Lord
has just stated,—“For their sakes I sanctify myself.”
Brethren, it was a complete, an unreserved, a voluntary
consecration, and setting apart of his whole person, hu-
man and divine, on the stipulation and understanding
that his people might have the full enjoyment of all he
was, and of all the fulness he contained. Our glorious
Lord utters these words in prayer; he stands, as it were,
beside his burnt-offering, he lays his hand upon the head
of the victim and he claims for his people a full equiva-
lent for the travail of his soul,—viz., the putting away of
their sins, the bestowing upon them his own divine
righteousness, the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost, and the
supply of every grace which could be necessary for their
complete, absolute, and everlasting sanctification in the
sight of God. In 1 Thess. v. 23, we have the Apostle’s
prayer for the complete sanctification of the Lord’s
people. “The very God of peace sanctify you *wholly*;
and I pray God your whole spirit and body be preserved,
undefiled unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;”
and he adds, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also
will do it.” This prayer of the Apostle seems to be
merely the response of the Holy Ghost to our Lord’s own
reading, when he said, “For their sakes I sanctify my-
self that they also may be sanctified through the truth.”
and truly, “faithful is he who hath promised, who also
will do it.”

Again, we read in 1 Cor. i. 30,—“Of him ” (that is the Father) “are ye” (believing sinners) “in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” So true it is that the great and wondrous fact our Lord had just stated in prayer is evermore the ground and source of the complete sanctification of his people.

II. But let us consider the passage in the second sense,—“Through the truth,” as the appointed means for effecting this object so dear to our Saviour’s heart,—the sanctification of his people. By “the truth” is meant the facts and doctrines of the everlasting gospel. Many things are true; these are emphatically “*the truth*,” as there are many books; but this is emphatically *the book* the Bible. No doubt “the truth,” of which the Lord Jesus Christ is specially the substance, is what is here alluded to,—“the truth,” revealing to us his everlasting condescending, unchanging love, and what that love has led him to do for us, even to lay down his life that we might live through him—“the truth,” revealing to us that he is now at the right hand of God, and that his object in being there is that he might ever live to make intercession for us,—“the truth,” revealing to us the grandeur and majesty of the salvation he has accomplished, and the union which he has effected between himself and his people, that they might evermore dwell in him, and he in them, as members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and that they might inherit all things which flow from the virtue of that union.

It is evermore the truth of Christ and his salvation

received into our minds by the operation of the Holy Spirit, by which we are practically separated from all evil, and consecrated unto God. All the fruits of gospel sanctification are "fruits of *faith*" in "the truth as it is in Jesus." Observe how strikingly this connection is brought out in Col. i. 4-6, the Apostle says, "Since we heard of your *faith* in Christ Jesus, and of the *love* which ye have to all the saints for the *hope* which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in *the word of the truth* of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth *fruit*, as it doth also in you, *since the day ye heard of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth." Since they knew the word of the truth of the gospel, since they knew the grace of God in truth, *faith* was the result—*faith* in Jesus; and *love* was the result of *faith*—*love* to all the saints; and *hope* was a result—*hope* laid up for them in heaven; and *fruitfulness* was a result; and, finally, another result is added in verse 10, a "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." So that it is evident the word of the truth of the gospel is the means by which the believer is practically consecrated to God. It is only so far as we have real Scriptural knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, through the truth, that we believe on him; and in our real believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is that we have fellowship with him; and in real fellowship and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, consists *the very life and essence* of gospel sanctification. As we live in Jesus we live on Jesus, and we enjoy communion with him in living on him; in proportion as we do so we cannot sin; for we live to God. The mind fully occu-

pied with the love of God in Christ cannot be occupied with sin ; the eye filled with the beauty of Jesus, which is fixed upon that beauty, cannot be attracted by earthly and sinful things ; the heart engaged in contemplating Jesus, while so employed, is above the earth : that soul dwells consciously in God, and stands upon its high places ; and, therefore it is, the Lord Jesus Christ prays, " Sanctify them through thy truth."

Every development and department of this gospel sanctification is brought about through the operation of the truth. In 2 Peter i. 4, we learn that it is through the knowledge of the truth we are made " partakers of the divine nature." Again (1 Peter i. 23,) we read " Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"—in other words, by " the truth." In verse 22 we read, " Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth." Observe the connection ; obedience to the truth, faith in the truth, is the means of purifying the soul. See also Acts xv. 9,— " purifying their hearts by faith." In 1 John iii. 3 you have the same thing said of hope. What is hope but the principle of the divine life which lays hold upon the promises, and expects them, and specially the promise of our own blessed Master's coming again in glory?—" Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." And if we speak of love, what is that which produces love in the soul, love to God? " We love him because" we *believe* that " he first loved us." In 2 Cor. v. 13, we read of this love of Christ, that it is a constraining principle, leading us to live for him who died for us.

“The truth” is the element in which the Christian lives and walks. The beloved disciple expresses it in one word; “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” The belief of the truth is, moreover, the seal of the believer’s adoption and the earnest of his inheritance. See Eph. i. 13, 14:—“In whom ye . . . trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.” “The truth,” is also the means and instrument by which the Holy Ghost is communicated to the soul; therefore the gospel is called, in 2 Cor. iii. 8, “the ministration of the Spirit.” And again the Apostle asks, in Gal. iii. 2, whether they had “received the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith;” and in verse 5 he speaks of the preacher of the gospel as “he that ministered unto them in the Spirit.” “The entrance of thy word giveth light;” and when we dwell in light and walk in light, we dwell in the element in which God himself dwells, “who dwelleth in the light.” It is into God’s own marvellous light he leads the soul when the truth enters into any mind. Light! discovering to us what we are, that we may fly from self. Light! discovering to us what sin is, that we may loathe it. Light! discovering to us what Satan is, that we may not be ensnared by his devices. Light! discovering to us what the world is, that we may not be entrapped by its delusions. Light! unveiling hell, that we may fly from it to our refuge. Light! discovering an opened heaven, and him who beckons us in; “if we walk in the

light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleaseth us from all sin."

The truth into which the Lord introduces us tells that "God is love," "and that he commended his love us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us it tells us of a Saviour who "saves to the uttermost that come unto God by him;" it tells us of blood that meets our need, and has made our peace with God; tells us of home and rest where he who loved us is all all; and that even the way by which we are journeying thither, is surrounded with "angels and archangels in the company of heaven." With open face we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord; and as we drink into the spirit and rejoice in the truth, "we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." Therefore he prays, "Sanctify them through thy truth." How can the eyes that are fixed upon God in Christ engage in sin? How can the ears that are listening to his voice be attentive to iniquity? How can the hands that clasp his feet "put at sin as with a cart-rope?" How can the feet anointed to follow him, and whose bonds he has unloosed, wander wilfully into the bye-ways of sin and error? When we are led astray, it is because the eye is not on Christ, the ear is not listening to Christ, and the heart is not filled with Christ, and then, alas! alas! other things come in but when we are engaged with the truth as it is in Jesus in the light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, sin and self lose their attractiveness; and when the world, the flesh, and the devil present to us their temptations, w

all feel as David did when the three worthies broke through the Philistines' hosts and brought him the water for which he had thirsted from the well of Bethlehem; He poured it out unto the Lord: and he said, Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?" This shall be the answer of the conscience and of the heart to every lust. Is not this the blood of my Lord Jesus Christ, "who gave himself for my sins, that he might deliver" me "from this present evil world?"

III. "Sanctified through the truth," that is, *truly sanctified*, so it is rendered in the margin. The sanctification which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaded for on his people's behalf, and with which alone he can be satisfied, is sanctification in the *true sense*, that which will meet all their need from regeneration unto glory. He will have no substitution of forms or ceremonies, or washings, or cleansings. He will be content with nothing less than that they shall be "truly sanctified." Whatever deficiency there may be in them, whatever corruptions, whatever infirmities, whatever failures they may suffer from, he here tells his Father, and tells us, there is enough in him to counterbalance them, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be *truly* sanctified." Nothing less than our being truly sanctified will compensate him for the travail of his soul, and nothing in his view is to be truly sanctified but what involves identification with himself. For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be *truly* sanctified." His people's sanctification must be

according to the measure of the fulness of the supply laid up in himself for their benefit.

Union with our Lord Jesus is the root and source his people's sanctification. "From me is thy fruit found Jesus living in us, who once died for us; Jesus Christ revealed in us," "formed in us," operating in us, speaking with our words, looking out with our eyes, loving with our hearts, ministering with our hands, and walking with our feet, is our complete and practical sanctification. Oh! to be able to say, "It is no more I that live but Christ that liveth in me."

You have the believer's sanctification clearly traced from the beginning, so far as it applies to our earth history, in Gal. i. 15, 16, "It pleased God, *who separated me from my mother's womb,*"—the moment he had existence, separated by God, set apart then and there, "*and called by his grace,*"—the result and fruit of His setting him apart in love—"to reveal his Son in me." This is true practical sanctification, and this is evermore its order. The God of all grace, because of his great love, set apart his child the moment it has existence and then in time calls him by his grace through the truth, tells him *he is a child*, and then, in the knowledge of his adoption, reveals the Son of God not only *to him* but *in him*. This is the being "*truly sanctified,*" which the Lord speaks.

And here he concludes his prayer, so far as it has special reference to his disciples. It will help us to have clear ideas on this subject to remember that when he prays for their sanctification, (1) he does not pray that their *persons* might be sanctified, for this simple reason

ir persons had been sanctified. "Sanctified by God the Father" (Jude i.) "Separated, sanctified from their mother's womb." This sanctification of the persons of the people was not a matter for prayer, it had been already effected by God's own sovereign gracious act; a mediator was necessary in order to this. We need to learn these things, for we live at a lower rate than our Lord has provided for us. If we are to be sanctified through the truth *we must know the truth*. The Lord will not pray that the persons of his people might be sanctified through the truth, for this simple reason, *they had been "sanctified by God the Father."*

(2) He does not pray for an increased degree of their sanctification in himself. That was impossible! They could not be more sanctified in the sight of God than they were. The Apostle, addressing believers at Corinth, speaks of them all as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," one as much as another; no possible ground exists for degrees in reference to the sanctification of believers in Christ Jesus—"He is made unto them sanctification"—"ye are complete in him."

(3) Neither does he pray for the sanctification of *the natural man*. The natural man never can be sanctified. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" make what you will of it, it cannot rise higher than the nature and principle from which it has its beginning; "flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God." If the Lord does not refer to the natural man, much less does he mean the natural body when he says "Sanctify them." We await the morning of the resurrection for the sanctification of the body, then "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Not, for sanctification of their persons, not for increase of their sanctification, not for the sanctification of natural man, not for the sanctification of their poor flesh doth he pray, but for the illumination and consequent sanctification of their minds and hearts "through truth." Thus the Apostle prays for believers at Ephesus "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling." (Eph. i. 17. 18.) Certainly it is the knowledge of our standing in Christ, the realization of our completeness in him, and the conscious possession of promises, all "yea and amen to us in him" which are the operating principles upon the practical walk of the believer:—"Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." The practical walk and life of the Christian is the result and development of the complete sanctification the believer possesses, in the Lord Jesus Christ. The more we apprehend this, the more we walk in the light, and in the conscious possession of truth according to the truth, the more will our walk be worthy of our high and holy calling.

Let us endeavour to keep in mind the following important matters:

1. Evidently, all those for whose sins Christ has satisfied, shall be "sanctified through the truth." Therefore for whom he has made satisfaction he will undoubtedly sanctify.

2. What it cost him so much *to procure*, he will ha

fail to *effect*; what it required such labour and pains, and suffering, and humiliation to accomplish, he will not be likely to neglect. If a man lays out millions of money in purchasing a property, he is not likely easily to let it go. Depend upon it the Lord Jesus Christ spent too much pains, laid out too much precious blood for the purchase of his people, and for the sanctification of his people, to be easily deprived of them. Who is to deprive him of them? In virtue of his mediatorial offered work, he is over all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

3. Again, what a motive *this* fact ought to be to exhort us to use the means God has provided, in order that we might walk with God closely and in fellowship. If it be a matter so near the Saviour's heart, can we be careless on a matter that doth so deeply interest him, and in which not only his honour, but our own happiness is involved. No child of God can be happy while he is walking carelessly; his own peace is not less at stake than his Father's honour.

4. Again, the truth which reveals Jesus to us as our sanctification, is God's own appointed means for accomplishing Christ's prayer, for our practical sanctification; for he says, "Sanctify them through thy truth," and "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Oh! let us value "the truth,"—God's own truth written for us as in letters of gold, witnessed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and which the wisdom of God hath devised, and the love of God, the grace of God, and the power of God

hath bestowed. Let us value the truth. If we let it go, we let go the means of our own sanctification. "If we sell the truth and sell it not;" if we let it go, we let go the means of our own comfort. Oh! contend for the truth, the simple "truth as it is in Jesus." Men and devils advise other ways and means for sanctifying the soul. God's means is obedience to "the truth."

But, it may be asked, is this sanctification through the truth always discernible? To the well-instructed mind it may be so, but truly one of the last lessons we learn in the school of Christ is to recognise in our humiliations, our failures, our emptyings, and in the producing causes of our sighs and tears, some of God's own appointed or permitted means for our true sanctification.

Again, it may be asked, Is this sanctification through the truth always progressing? Undoubtedly! The Lord never allows any work to which he has put his hand to stand still; but we are very apt to make many gross mistakes as to this progressing sanctification. Depend upon it we are never more practically or truly sanctified than when we are most disgusted with ourselves, and when in conscious need and bankruptcy, we are leaning most confidently, and unreservedly, on the Lord Jesus Christ, and with no other warrant for doing so than that to be found in God's testimony concerning him as given to us, by the Spirit of God in the truth. This sanctification of the believer consists as much in the daily discovery of himself, and that he is nothing, but sinful need, as in teaching him that "Christ is all and in all." Perhaps when we are near the end of our earthly education

the school of Christ we are beginning to know this, but young believers are apt to look rather at what they suppose to be the testimony of the Spirit of God *within them, concerning themselves*, than at the testimony of the Spirit of God *without them concerning Christ*; and thus in ignorance and unbelief they draw disparaging, sheartening conclusions concerning themselves because "the truth" which the Spirit of God discovers to them of themselves.

If we are walking in the light, the light will discover the truth, and make "all things manifest." The Spirit of God cannot shew us a more abominable picture than we are in ourselves, and cannot afford to shew us self at by degrees, and in the measure in which he reveals Jesus to us, because self is so abominable, it would crush our hearts to realize it, scarcely could our faith outlive the discovery; but as he reveals us to ourselves, he doth so discover to us God's salvation, supplying promises of grace to meet the infirmity and the ruin of our nature; and as we rise to fuller and worthier views of sinful self, apprehending at the same time more fully the things for which we are apprehended in Christ Jesus, *our practical sanctification goes on*; and I know of no practical sanctification on earth beyond that at which that believer has arrived, who in the fullest realization of his own unworthiness can nevertheless say with the Apostle, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

33

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word.”—JOHN xvii. 20.

WE have now arrived at the third part of our Lord's prayer. From verse 1 to 6, his petitions had peculiar reference to himself; from verse 6 to 20, to his disciples, and from this verse to the end they embrace his whole church.

We have great depths to explore through the remainder of this chapter. Our Lord reserved his highest petitions to the close of his prayer, and until his great heart had taken in and embraced all the company of the redeemed. We may gather from the fact of the Lord's petitions rising higher and higher in the scale of glory as he approaches the close of his prayer, that the more he thinks of his people, and the more he exercises himself, as mediator, in their behalf, the more is his heart drawn out to their need and to themselves.

A cursory view of the whole prayer will help our minds to an intelligent understanding of the great truths before us. He who is addressing the Father had lain in his bosom from all eternity, and now, in the hearing of his disciples, he is pleased to utter transactions which had taken place between the Father and himself before the world was:—verse 5, “O Father, glorify thou now with thine own self, with *the glory which I had with thee before the world was;*” verse 24, “Father, I will that they

so, whom thou *hast* given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me ; *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*" Again, he speaks of the highest act of God's love and grace towards his people as consisting in the fact of his having given them to him : verse 6, " I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world ; thine they were, and thou gavest them me." And this is repeated again and again—verse 9, " I pray . . . for them which thou *hast given me* ; for they are thine : " and in verse 11, " Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom *thou hast given me.*" and in verse 12, " Those that *thou gavest me* I have kept : " and in verse 24, " I will that they also, whom thou hast *given me*, be with me where I am." Moreover, he speaks of his having manifested to them his Father's name, and of having given to them his Father's word, as the immediate consequence of his having received them as his Father's gift—verse 6, " I have manifested thy name unto *the men which thou gavest me* out of the world : " and in verse 8, " I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." Then he prays for them : he prays for their safety, " Holy Father, keep them ; " he prays for their sanctification, " Sanctify them through thy truth : " for their union, " That they all may be one ; " and he demands their glory, for he says, " Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

Our dear Lord might have asked anything for his people that either the power or love of God could supply, he was willing to ask the best things for them, and he

merited that they should obtain any blessing he might be pleased to demand for them of his Father. Yet he doth not ask worldly riches for them, nor long life, nor great influence; he doth not ask for them the possession and enjoyment of the things which this poor, mistaken world runs riot in order to obtain; he doth not ask that they should be exempt from trial, and difficulties, and temptations, and disappointments. On the contrary he says, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world;" but he does pray that they may be kept in the Father's name, and that they may be sanctified through the Father's truth, that they might be united in the Father's love, and that ultimately they might behold the Father's glory. In this beautiful and comprehensive petition, we may each read our own names, indeed we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The weakest believer and the feeblest, may hear his own name presented before the Lord, and his own case considered and provided for, as truly, and as fully, as was the name and the case of the disciple whom Jesus loved. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

Now, in order as fully as possible to enjoy this precious passage, consider three things:—

I. The Person who here prays; and the character in which he prays.

II. The persons for whom he pleads, as they are described in his prayer—"those who shall believe on him."

III. The means and instrumentality by which they shall believe—"through their word."

I. *The Person.* He who here presents himself, and opens out his whole heart before his heavenly Father is personally and essentially the only begotten Son of God; but he does not pray in this character. Deity could not pray, Deity could not receive from any one, that he who was Deity had become man; and here he who was God-man prays to his Father and our Father, his God and our God, as mediator; in accordance with the offices he had undertaken and assumed in the covenant between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in reference to the relationships in which he stood then and here towards those for whom he prayed.

Christ now prayed as "the head of his body the church." In the natural body it is the head which thinks for all the other members: the head provides for them, feels for them, sees for them, receives nourishment for them; and here, as head of the church, Christ pleads for all the members of his mystical body, for as the natural body is not one member but many, so also the mystical body of Christ is not one member but many; and the head is Christ. All the concerns of all his members were before him when he uttered this prayer: all his fulness was for their benefit, and he knew it and would have them know it also; he was now, as head of his church, about to lay down his life for his people. Not one name of all the many names of all the members of that mystical body, not one case of all their many cases was overlooked or forgotten in his great heart.

He prays, moreover, as their representative. He does represent his people: he is their wisdom, and their righteousness, and their sanctification and their redemp-

tion ; he merits all things for them, and he here claims for them all that he merits. Surely if we did but meditate more on the Lord Jesus Christ as he is here set before us, we could not but have confidence in him, we could not distrust or fear him, we could not entertain hard thought of him.

II. Consider *the persons* for whom he prays. "Those who shall believe on me." They are here described in three-fold point of view, viz., in reference—

1. To the time when they believed.
2. The object on whom they believed.
3. The instrumentality by which they believed.

Remember we have here the Lord Jesus' *own* description of the persons for whom he prays. "Those who shall believe on me."

(1) Mark the time "who shall believe." They had not believed yet. The persons for whom the Lord Jesus Christ here pleads did not yet know him, had not come to him,—not one of them. He speaks of the time of their believing as the future, "I pray . . . for them all which *shall believe* on me through their word." As God loves his people in his own election view of them, Christ prays for them. What encouragement is here for those who pray for unconverted relatives ! Some of us have children who as yet know not the Lord, parents who have not yet believed, friends very dear to us who have never come to him : here he prayed for those who knew him not, and believed not on him. His prayer for them brought the Holy Ghost to them that they might believe ; and he who had said to Jesus, "Ask

e, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," saith also to us in his word, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Son's name I will do it." First he prays for his people in their unbelief, that they *may* believe; and then he prays for them when they *do* believe that the eyes of their understanding "being enlightened; they may know what is the hope of his calling, and that the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the heavens."

(2) The object of their faith. "I pray for them . . . which shall believe *on me*;" he does not say, which shall believe in God, but "*on me*;" he does not say, which shall believe the word of God, but "on me;" he does not say, who shall believe in their salvation, but "on me." Here we learn the faith that justifies is faith in *the Person* of the Lord Jesus Christ. Who is there in all London, except a few professed infidels, who do not tell you they believe in God?—who, in this country, but a few professed infidels, do not say they believe in the word of God? We may quite satisfy ourselves that we believe in God, in the word of God; and in our own ultimate salvation; and yet we may not be included in our Lord's prayer, because he does not say, "I pray for them which shall believe"—in God, or in the word of God, or in their own salvation, but—"on me." Not that to believe in God, in the word of God, and in the fact of our own salvation, is not our privilege and duty. Oh, no! But when we believe in him, we believe in God in a different sense; we believe in the word of God as a different thing, and for a different object. We believe in God as

loving us poor sinners, and giving his Son to die ; we believe in the word of God as the truth revealing this fact ; we believe in our salvation as the end of our faith ; but we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour who took our place, died in our stead, was wounded for our transgressions, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and who, in resurrection glory, now stands before the throne as our representative, himself the object of all-justifying faith. Alas ! how many talk of believing in God, and in his word, who have never believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have never taken refuge in him for their salvation.

There are several passages of scripture which bear upon this truth. Let us quote a few (Acts xiii. 38, 39) —“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and *by him*, all that believe are justified from all things.” In Rom. iii. 24, 25, we read, “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : whom God hath set forth to be propitiation through *faith in his blood*.” Observe how justifying faith is limited to the Lord Jesus Christ as its object, and to faith in his blood. John iii. 16, is a passage familiar to us all,—“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth *in him* should not perish, but have everlasting life ;” and, at the close of the chapter, verses 35, 36, “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into *his* hand.” This is what we are to believe—it is God’s testimony concerning Christ. Next follows what we are to believe concerning the Son, “He that believeth

the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth in the Son shall not see life; *but the wrath of God cometh on him,*" even though he profess to believe in God, and his Bible, and though he profess to be sure of his own salvation! "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe *on me.*"

There are four acts of the mind in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, wherein consists the essence of justifying faith. First, there is knowledge—see Isaiah liii. —"by his knowledge" (or by the knowledge of himself) "shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." See also John xvii. 3: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This knowledge is conveyed to us in the gospel. Angels came down at the nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sang, "We bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." This knowledge we must have before we can have any justifying faith in him: all faith in Christ is grounded upon the knowledge of Christ." "I know," says the apostle, "whom I have believed." If he did not know him, he could not believe upon him; he is a fool who believes a man he does not know. We must know Jesus Christ as set forth in God's word ere we can possibly believe upon him. This, then, is the first act of the soul, in reference to justifying faith,—acquaintance with Christ, in the *knowledge of him*, as gathered from the word of God,—knowledge as to who he is, what he has done, and what he has promised.

Next follows *the assent of the heart* to what we know of him and this is called "*believing on him*" as contrasted with mere knowledge. When we know what is declared concerning the Lord Jesus Christ—his love, his life, and his work—then follows *the assent of the heart* to what we know. Thus the Apostle states it in 1 John v. 11: "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son; and this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." We must first know the facts recorded, and the assent of the heart to those recorded facts is called "*believing on him.*"

The third act of the soul follows—viz., *accepting him on whom we believe*—in other words, receiving the Lord Jesus Christ:—"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."—(John i. 12.) "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."—(2 Tim. i. 12.) In the beautiful description of the faith of the early patriarchs (Heb. xi. 18) we have all three acts of this kind enumerated:—"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having *seen them afar off*"—there is the eye of the understanding, the intelligent acquaintance with truth, the knowledge of the fact that God had promised; "and *were persuaded of them*"—there is the believing of them; and thirdly, *they "embraced them,"*—took them in, accepted them.

The fourth act of the soul in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ is to trust in him,—resting on him, reposing

lying on him, as being what the promises declare him to be. Thus it is written (Eph. i. 13, 14), "in whom ye have so trusted, *after* that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

This then is what true faith is: knowing what God has said, believing what we know, accepting what we believe, and then rolling ourselves, and our burdens, our poor weary heart and soul upon him on whom we believe. For all who do so the Lord Jesus prayed, not for his disciples alone, but "for all them also which shall believe in me through their word."

But here an objection meets us. Some one will say, "We cannot believe of ourselves, we cannot know, we cannot receive, we cannot repose upon the Lord Jesus Christ, or rest in him of our own selves. True! you will not and therefore cannot, but the gospel itself is the very means and instrument by which God produces this knowledge and this believing, and bestows the ability to receive and repose our souls on the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith comes by hearing," knowledge comes by hearing, receiving the Lord Jesus Christ comes by hearing of him; and the repose of the soul upon him for salvation is the simple result of hearing and believing that he is the Saviour, "able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." The entreaties of the gospel, the warnings of the gospel, the commands of the gospel are God's means for quickening sinners' souls, begetting living faith in their hearts, and ministering to them the Holy Ghost; and all the fruits of a righteous walk, and the hopes of a happy eternity flow from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Do we speak of comfort?—"Let

not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God believe also in me." See God's appointed channel for the supply of all his comforts to your soul ! Do you desire to be holy and pure ?—"Every man that hath this hope in him" (Jesus) "purifieth himself, even as he is pure" Faith in him is the fountain head of all purity. Do you desire to be filled with the Holy Ghost ?—"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that *believeth on me*, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that *believe on him* should receive."

This is most important truth, it is most blessed teaching. Do not rest satisfied with general notions of truth, do not rest satisfied with vague ideas of believing in God. The justifying object of faith is the Lord Jesus Christ. And our believing on the Lord Jesus Christ demonstrates our interest in all his salvation work, for he says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." If you want to know whether or not you are a child of God, ask yourself another question. "Do I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?" The weakest believer is interested in Christ as truly and as much as the strongest believer, for he prays for those who believe on him without any reference to the degree of their faith: he says nothing about it. Again, when Jesus is the entire object of our faith, it implies two things: (1) The conscious deficiency of our own merit (if we had merit of our own we need not lean upon him). (2) The

alized all-sufficiency of his merit on whom we believe. Oh! let us fetch in Christ to our hearts by faith, lay hold on Christ, receive Christ, live on Christ, that out of his fulness we may all receive, and grace for grace."

(3) We have here a description of those for whom the Lord Jesus Christ prayed, in connection with *the instrumentality* by which they believed. It is not every faith that is divine faith, it is not every believer that is included in the Lord's prayer, it is not every one who calls himself a believer that is alluded to; when he says "those who believe," he means those only who believe on him "*through their word.*" I know no more important truth for the days in which we are living than this, and dwell upon it because it is most precious and essential. Now observe the faith, *the only faith* our Lord Jesus Christ acknowledges, is faith begotten by *the teaching of the word which he had given to his disciples*; "for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;" "and I pray for them which shall believe on me *through their word:*" not through traditions, not through human systems, not through improvements, not through churches, and not through ministers, but "through their word:" not, of course, the word of which they were the *authors*, but the word of which they were the *preachers*, and of which they were the *penmen*.

Remember these things,—

(1) It is the gospel of the grace of God, the New Testament record, God's testimony concerning the Lord Jesus and his love, that "he died for our sins and rose again for our justification;" *which makes believers.*

This gospel is the instrument in the hands of God producing faith and "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

(2) No other faith whatever, however much religion there may be about it, no faith grounded on any other communication is accounted by the Lord Jesus Christ to be the faith of his people. It is faith exclusively through "*their word*," of which he speaks, and therefore *no other believers, whatever they may believe but only those who believe through the word of God, who were prayed for by the Lord Jesus on this occasion*, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

Oh! I feel the power and the importance of this statement, and the necessity that exists for insisting on it in this our day, when such a strange and confused medley of doctrines are preached, founded upon I know not what—revelations, theories, new discoveries, dogmatic councils, or decretals having no agreement with the word which our Lord Jesus Christ gave to his Apostles. Such faith is not founded on revelation, but delusion; it is not faith, it is unbelief; it is not wisdom, it is folly; it is not salvation, it is ruin.

We know not what new creeds may yet be preached but remember, I charge you, bring it before God in prayer, and impress it affectionately and earnestly on those you love, or on those you would rescue from confusion and superstition that *Believers in other words in other teaching than that which the Apostles taught, are none of Christ's believers; and they are none of those whom Christ prayed; for "Neither pray I for the*

one, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Oh, how this statement of our blessed Lord magnifies the value of the Scriptures!

34

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.—JOHN xvii. 21.

WE read in Exod. xxviii. 29, that the high priest was bound by the law of his office whenever he approached God in worship to bear about him "the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart . . . for a memorial before the Lord continually." And here we have his great Antitype, the Lord Jesus, presenting himself before his Father; having gathered into his prayer every name and case of all his believing ones to the end of time, he now presses his whole heart's desire for them before God: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

Beloved brethren, it is a vast effort for human thought to conceive, or for human language to utter, even in a remote degree, the immensity of the grace here expressed by the Lord Jesus Christ in reference to his blood-bought ones, and the unspeakable glory here claimed by him for the weakest and the feeblest of the believer in his word. I shall endeavour, the Lord

helping me, to approach the subject by degrees, and best I can.

You will understand that the Lord's prayer might have been answered. He could not pray in vain. And if this be so, then it is a divine fact, a most blessed reality, that the Lord's people, all his believing people *are one*, according to his own words, "even as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee." But what does this mean by these words? What is the force of them?

Let us ascertain in the first place what they do mean. (1) The Lord does not here speak of an absolute, complete, and perfect *uniformity* between believers in name. If he did, his prayer has not been answered, no such uniformity exists. (2) He does not speak of a union between the different *sects* and denominations of the professing Christian church—if he did, his prayer has not been answered, for alas! no such union exists. I believe sects and denominations to be the result of the devil's attempt to mar and hinder as far as possible the visible union of the church of God: they all have their root in our spiritual pride and selfishness, our self-sufficiency and our sin. (3) The Lord does not pray that his people should be more united in his Father's purpose, because this would be *impossible*. It is a most precious truth, and one which the Scriptures treat most fully, that the Father always saw his people united to himself in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this view of them he elected them, and in this view of them he blessed them "with all spiritual blessing in heaven and places in Christ." He has never regarded Jesus apart from his church, nor his church apart from Jesus; and

never will and never can do so. (4) The Lord doth pray that his people may be more united one to another and to himself *in fact*, no need for this, because they are in fact united.

But you may ask why then does he use such language—"that they all may be one?" The answer is this: in our heavenly Father's dealings with his people in grace, he always hath regard to the righteousness, the justice, and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. In all his outgoings to us, both in his promises and in his performances, he hath evermore had respect unto the Lord Jesus Christ as being in himself the meritorious cause of all our blessings, and his chiefest intercession on our behalf as the divinely arranged channel by which they are to flow in upon our souls. You remember after the Lord had spoken wonderful things by the prophet in the way of promise and grace concerning the people of Israel, revealing what he would do for them, and in them, he says, "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the people of Israel to do it for them."—(Ezek. xxxvi. 37.) Thus, in like manner, whatsoever blessings have been secured to us in Christ, all are to be enjoyed by us *as received at his hands, and obtained for us through his intercession*: thus we are told of our Great High Priest that, "he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25), and therefore our Lord here prays "that they all may be one;" first, because he was himself the ground of this union; secondly, because his prayer was the appointed and suitable channel

through which the benefits of it were to be enjoyed thirdly, that we might understand what a costly a divine blessing this union is; and lastly, that our hearts might be assured as to the certainty and abiding character of this union, seeing Christ desired and prayed for. Oh! for faith while we listen that we may henceforth rejoice in the privileges and blessings which our union with Christ and with each other involves. His prayer did not make this union a fact, but it was the divinely appointed means of communicating the enjoyment and the realization of the fact to his believing people that in realizing their union, they might *manifest* it. This was what his heart was set upon.

What then is this union of which he speaks? First there is that union which all the Lord's believing people have one with another as members of the same body, as children in the same family, as living stones in the same spiritual temple, the foundation-stone of which is the Lord Jesus Christ. In Eph. iii. 15, we have the thought of the family brought out, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;" a family composed not only of living believers, but including those who shall believe for ages to come: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:" and not only of present and future believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but the family including all who have died in the faith, and are gone before—the family in heaven as well. In Col. i. 20, we read: "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." The whole

ject is beautifully sketched in Eph. ii. 14, 15: "He our peace, who hath made both one,"—Jew and Gentile, formerly separated, now united,—“and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” Here is first, union between Jew and Gentile, and then between both with God: for he adds, “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”

But it may be asked, How can such union as this really exist, seeing it is made up of persons of divers nations, of divers ages, and of divers circumstances? The bond of union between the people of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a visible or corporeal one, but it is not the less close and real on that account. There are seven grounds of union binding the children of God to each other.

1. In Eph. iv. 3, “the unity of the Spirit.” The same Holy Ghost dwells in all,—“*in* one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.”—1 Cor. xii. 13.

2. In Eph. iv. 13, “the unity of the faith.” All the children of God have their trust, hope, and confidence fixed on the same Father; all speak of the same righteousness, all plead the same blood; they are all born of promise, and are “children by faith.” Oh! how much more there is to unite the children of God than there is to separate them, if they could only believe it.

3. In Acts iv. 32, we read of the early believers (a picture of the case as it ought to be), that they “were of one heart.”

4. In Col. ii. 2, "knit together in love." Love unites the children of God, wherever they meet, whenever they recognise each other they cannot help loving one another notwithstanding all their peculiarities, and all their differences. When hearts and hearts are drawn together, and they speak one to the other of the one hope, the one glorious home, oh! how they cleave to one another, and the unity of love is manifest and felt.

5. In Col. iii. 15, "the bond of peace;" sweet peace of which our Lord said, "Peace I leave with you, and peace I give unto you." Oh! it is a heavenly bond which strangers cannot intermeddle with it.

6. In 1 Cor. i. 10, "perfectly joined together in the same mind."

7. And in the same judgment.

These things lay deeply in our Lord's heart when he prayed "that they all might be one;" and the Holy Ghost has recorded it in his word, that we may have them evermore in our hearts also. Shame upon us that our union is not more manifested, seeing there are many heavenly bonds cementing us together, and from which we are absolutely unable to disengage ourselves.

Secondly. There is the union between the body made up as it is of many members, and the glorious head himself. In Col. i. 18, we read, "He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Again, chapter ii. 19, the Apostle finds fault with certain persons at Colosse, for "not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, in-

easeth with the increase of God." In Eph. iv. 13, we
 have this wonderful union described in its consumma-
 tion: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of
 the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,
 unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,"
 and verse 15: "speaking the truth in love, may grow
 up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."
 Ah, what union is here! We know something of it as
 it exists in the natural body; where the head sees for
 the whole body, thinks for the body, provides for the
 body, receives nourishment for the body, and where if
 the head be honoured the whole body is honoured, for
 if one member be honoured all the members rejoice
 with it." See I Cor. xii. 12-14, "As the body is one, and
 hath many members, and all the members of that one
 body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ: for
 by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether
 we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free;
 and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For
 the body is not one member, but many: and the head
 cannot say to the foot I have no need of you." The
 head of the spiritual mystical body being united to it,
 thinks for it, provides for it, sees for it, rules it, receives
 the nourishment for it, and from the head, by joints and
 bands, the whole body and its members receives the
 nourishment ministered; the anointing upon the head
 comes down upon the members, and the glory upon the
 head shall yet be the glory of the members. Beautiful
 union; the Lord prays that it may be realized by his
 people!

Thirdly. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in

thee." Here are divine words, very difficult to open out. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks as mediator, as the day-man between God and us, for he speaks in prayer. In another place (chapter xiv. 10) he uses similar language: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." And here he prays that as the Father is in him and he is in the Father, so his people may be one with him, and with the Father. He could not ask more: to believe there is nothing beyond this possible; and to suppose if more were possible, and if there were anything beyond, that his blood could merit for us, or his love secure, we should have it.

If we refer to the first and second Epistles to the Thessalonians we read, "The church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. i. 1), and, in 2 Thess. i. 1, the same language occurs: "The church of the Thessalonians in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." The amazing truth here expressed is, that there is a union between himself and his people, which can be illustrated only by the union between the Father and the Son. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." Now there is an *as* of similitude and likeness, and there is also an *as* of equality. The *as* here is not the *as* of equality,—only the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost can be united in equality; but it is the *as* of similitude and likeness. The expression is used in the same way in Matt. v. 48:—"Be ye . . . perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." It does not mean Be as perfect as God, but a perfection of likeness and similitude; as also in the prayer commonly called the

ord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

There is a three-fold union between the Lord Jesus Christ and his Father, and he will have a counterpart to each of them in the union between his people and himself. This subject is very deep. If the Spirit of God would only shine upon our minds, what a feast for our souls we should gather from it!

1. The highest union in existence, and the closest *possible*, is the union between the man Christ Jesus, and the second person in the Trinity, the Son of God. This is what is termed the hypostatic union. The human nature complete in all its fulness, and the divine nature complete in all its attributes, are united in one glorious person; the Godhead not interfering with the essentials of the manhood, and the manhood not interfering with the essentials of the Godhead; but both natures remaining complete in their perfection in one person—the Lord Jesus Christ—who is in all points like unto his brethren because he is man, and also one with the Father because he is God: and this union doth not destroy or hinder the human feelings of the man, nor doth the manhood dim the lustre and the glory of God. This union is altogether ineffable and inconceivable, but it is clearly revealed for the obedience and joy of faith.

Now the Lord will have the union between himself and his people to correspond in all respects with this; and even as his human nature is united to the Godhead in his own person, so are all his believing people united to him, as "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Can you grasp this thought?—that even as the

man and the God are united in one person—Jesus—which is the highest conceivable union, so is there like union between all believers in Jesus, and the human nature, which is united to the Godhead in his person. And this seems to be the full meaning of his words, “that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.” Oh! what blessings must outflow from such a fountain. What crowns, what glories, what enjoyments must result from such an union. “For ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

2. There is a second union between the Father and the Son,—the union of dear affection, and of mutual delight, Oh! how the Father and the Son delight in each other! The Scripture is full of this (John iii. 35): “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.” And in Isaiah xlii. 1: “Behold my servant whom I uphold: mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.” Hear the announcement of it from heaven at the Jordan: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”—(Matt. iii. 17.) And in John i. 18, he is spoken of as being “in the bosom of the Father.” Moreover, the love is mutual; for in John xiv. 31, it is written, “that the world may know that I love the Father.”

Now the Lord Jesus will have such union of love between his people, himself, and his Father that, even as the love of the Father rolls down upon us in and through Christ, so our love shall go back to him, to crown him and bless him; that thus we may dwell in God, and find no rest, no portion, no enjoyment but in his love,—that we may live, and rest, and nestle evermore, finding our a

him. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." Oh! nothing less than this will satisfy his love whose name is love; and nothing less than this can ever satisfy redeemed souls—the objects of that love.

3. There is a third union between the Father and the Son, and it consists in the inexpressible agreement and consent of their wills. They are diverse in person, but they never differ in thought, or aim, or end, or object, or motive. This is our Lord's meaning in John v. 19, a passage so much perverted by Socinians: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." And (verse 30), "I can of mine own self do nothing." He would not, he could not act apart, or think apart, or wish apart from his Father; there is perfect unity of will, perfect unity of heart, perfect unity of purpose.

Beloved, he will have the counterpart in his people. Even as he could say, not as I will, but as thou wilt, so he will have us say (not in word only but in truth also), "Father . . . not our will, but thine be done." Oh, it would be heaven on earth if we had more of this, more of entire submission to the Father's will! If we would only see with our Father's eyes, and hear with our Father's ears, and move as it were by the direction of our Father's eye, what a heaven our earth would be! Thus it was with Jesus. It was his "meat and drink" to do his Father's will, and he will have it the meat and drink of his people also. Happy people that are in such a case! That was a wonderful privilege which we read of as enjoyed by Israel in Old Testament times,—“a people near” unto God; here is a far higher privilege, even a

people "dwelling in God, and God in them," "Even thou, Father, art in me, and I thee." This is more than fellowship, this is more than communion, *it is union* union with God in Christ; the manhood being the link between Jehovah on the throne, and the believer on the earth, while from Jesus Christ the living and anointed head of his church, all blessings shall and must flow down throughout eternity on us his members, and unending praises and adoration shall ascend through him from us to God by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us.

Wonderful and unspeakable are the consequences flowing from this union.

(1) The *relationship* into which it introduces us. In reference to it our Lord said,—“I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”

(2) *The portion* to which this relationship entitles us,—“Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.”—(Rom. viii. 17.) And this not an inheritance apart from Christ, but possessed in Christ, and with Christ. It is written, “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given *all things* into his hand.” And we are in him, “Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” Again, it is written,—“Let no man glory in men: for all things are yours . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”—(1 Cor. iii. 21-23.)

(3) *The privileges* we have through this union “Through him we both”—Jew and Gentile, one body—“have access”—the word means we are taken by the hand by one who hath a right to introduce us, and pre-

anted before the throne—"have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—(Eph. ii. 18.)

(4) *The interest* in God which this union confers upon us, "we dwell in God and God in us," "and in dwelling in God, and God in us," we dwell in love, "and love in us," "for *God is love.*"

(5) Perfect *knowledge* of God is thus secured to us, we shall know God immediately and intimately. "Then shall I know," says the Apostle, "even as also I am known."

(6) *The sources of enjoyment* into which this union introduces us, even into "all the fulness of God," because it pleased the Father that in him—the mediator between us and the Deity—"should all fulness dwell," and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." We occupy a position only one degree further from God than Jesus himself: nay, we can hardly be said to be one degree further for, *in Jesus*, God dwells in us and we dwell in God.

(7) *The security.* People talk about believers being lost. Is it not monstrous to suppose that he will lose one of his members? "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourished it and cherished it, even as the Lord loveth the church."—(Eph. v. 29.) What shall separate us? Will Christ separate himself from God? When Christ separates himself from God then his people may be separated from Christ, not till then, for his prayer is that they all may be one: *as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.*"

(8) What a glory life is—*our life!* eternal life! "the divine nature!" "Your life is hid with Christ in God,"

and "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Ah, brethren, this is a very practical subject! "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? How ought we who have received the Lord Jesus Christ and God's fulness in him, to walk. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." What a new and even awful character sin assumes, when committed by a child of God! It is not like ordinary sin, it is so inexpressibly abominable, aggravated as it is by the peculiar position towards God which that sin occupies. Alas for sin against such love, against such union!

Lastly, remember, that this union provides and secures a Father's chastening rod for erring children. Will our Father treat us "as bastards, and not sons" when we sin thus against him?

May our faith be greatly increased by these weighty truths, and as we believe may we "make God, even the Most High, our habitation," and realise that no evil shall happen unto us, for he that hath made us one with his dear Son, will never leave us or forsake us. Brethren, be careful for nothing, *Two worlds* wait upon us for all things God hath given us in uniting us to himself in Christ.

31

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.—

JOHN xvii. 21.

OUR blessed Lord's prayer, here, is concerning those who had believed on him, and all who shall to the end of time believe on him through the words which he had given to his Apostles, even the word of God, "that all may be one," by which he evidently means, as indeed he most fully expresses, not only that all his believing people shall be united *one to another*, whether believers in Old Testament time or in New Testament days, whether Jew or Gentile, whether believers in the past, the present, or the future, whether they had their home in heaven now, or were still wandering upon the earth, that all should be united as children of the same heavenly family, of which he himself is the firstborn, all having the same Father, all to enjoy the same portion, all to be gathered into the same home, all to partake of the same joys, and having kindred sympathies, that all should be united together as members of the same mystical body, of which he himself was the head; members various, it may be, in their degrees of strength, and knowledge, and beauty, and usefulness, but each member in its place, each member having the proper proportion and growth, so as to carry out the symmetry of the whole body; each member ministering to the other, caring for the other, necessary to the other; each member interested in the prosperity of the other,—making one beautiful whole, of which the Lord himself was to be the risen

head and crown. He would have all united together living stones in the same spiritual temple, of which himself is the foundation and the top-stone; stones gathered from different quarries, not uniform in size or shape, or even in material, but gathered together and cemented in love; the builder of the temple, and the maker of it, God; the light, himself; and the anthem the praises of a redeemed people. He would have them one, as branches of the same living vine, of which himself is the root, evermore and through all eternity putting forth, through them, and by them, his beauty, his fragrance, and his fruitfulness. He would have them united together; the tiniest spray in all that living temple is necessary to its beauty and symmetry, and united to the root as truly and as closely as any of the many branches; and there God himself will rest in his love and sit down under its shadow with great delight.

But our Lord evidently means *more* than that because he says, "that they all may be one," and not only so, but one "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one *in us*," possessing the same nature, the same affections, the same will, the same character, and enjoying the same fulness. Alas brethren, these are wonderful words, they are "higher than heaven, what can we do? they are deeper than hell, what can we know?" Nothing remained, after their request, but that he should say, as he does in verse 23, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

I would remind you that our Lord's prayer is the origin of the union of which he speaks, or the cause

it; but the fruit and result of it. He is not praying that an union might be established between himself and his people which hitherto had not existed, but that the union which was always in the mind and purpose and heart of God, and on the ground of which Christ came down to be the Saviour, and the Holy Ghost to be the Comforter, *should be enjoyed* and manifested by his believing people. He would by his words scatter heavenly light around about them, and within them, that they might walk in the light as he himself was in the light," and the beloved Apostle teaches us in his first Epistle that thus we might have "fellowship . . . with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Here you observe our Lord leads us in prayer to the fountain-head, and source of fellowship with God in those mysterious words, "that they also may be one *in us*." I need not tell those who are acquainted with their Bibles that the Lord is using Scriptural language, and that he is referring directly to the familiar mode of expression by which the persons in the God-head are frequently described. You have it first in Gen. i. 26: "And God said, let *us* make man in our image, after our likeness;" in chap. iii. 22: "The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of *us*;" in chapter xi. 7: "Let *us* go down, and there confound their language." See also in Isaiah vi. 8-10, the record of the vision which the Prophet had of the manifestation of the glory of the Lord: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*? Then said I, here am I; send me: and he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye

indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat," &c. It is very interesting to trace the quotations of this passage from the Old Testament, in the New, and to learn who are meant by "*us*." The Prophet Isaiah tells us, (chapter vi. verse 1,) . . . "Jehovah sitting upon a throne," and (verse 8,) "I heard the voice of Jehovah saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*?" In John xii. 39-41, the passage is quoted as referring to Christ: "Therefore they could not believe (on Christ) because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them. The things said Esaias when he saw *his* glory, and spake of *him*,"—evidently the Lord Jesus Christ. And again, Acts xxviii. 25-26, the Apostle Paul quotes the same reference to the Holy Ghost: "Well spake *the Holy Ghost* by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." Observe the beautiful proof here of the existence and union of *three Persons* in the Godhead—the "*us*" of our Lord's Prayer,—Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Holy Ghost.

Now here our Lord prays that his people may be one, using the same language, you perceive "*one us!*" The union of the mystical body of believers with their head is personal union, their souls and bodies united to the soul and the body of the Lord Jesus Christ—our souls to his soul, our bodies to his body.

us our whole persons are united to his whole person, even as his whole person God-man is united to the Godhead, his manhood united to the Son, who is one in the Father, and his Spirit united to and dwelling in his people—that thus we might be truly one, and, not only one with each other, but also may be “*one in us*”—as truly, as effectually, as eternally, as beneficially, as mutually one, as we are,—“*one in us.*”

We need not be reminded that these words express and imply consequences and communion with God throughout eternity, in the contemplation of which one can scarcely breathe. Deity itself—the fountain-head from whence the soul and the body of the believer are to draw; Christ in our nature, the daysman between the Godhead and the sinner, laying his hand upon both—himself the channel through which all unctions and blessings are to flow; the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily, our supply; the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, in the believer, our power; and that fulness flowing on, until in the unspeakable language of the Apostle, we are “filled with all the fulness of God.”

Let us, for our own souls' profit, consider some few of the practical conclusions to which truth like this naturally leads us. First, we here learn wherein consists the highest blessing and source of blessing that even God himself can bestow upon us. It is union with himself; and this is more than all things else. Union with God in Christ is more than *all grace* and more than *all glory*, because all grace in time and all glory in eternity shall flow from this. We read in verse 22 a passage

which, I conceive, contains one of the deepest of the many deep sayings of Christ: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; *that they may be one even as we are one.*" Evidently, this union is more than the glory given, and which is but a means to it. It is a divine reality; and by-and-by, when it shall be fully manifested, Jesus shall "see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Meantime, faith may take its highest range, hope may soar to its loftiest flight, and love embrace its fullest portion; yet nothing that faith can reach, or hope aspire to, nothing that love itself is able to comprehend, can possibly exceed what this union with God secures—"That they also may be one *in us* for evermore.

Let us meditate much upon this great fact,—our union with God in Christ. It is the foundation gospel truth and revelation; and it is well adapted to fill our thoughts and hearts, our hopes and affections with Christ, by whom "God dwelleth in us and we in God," and who thus introduces it in his prayer that we, listening to him by faith, may be lifted out of the things of time, and that our desires may soar away unto the things of eternity. Oh, how humbly ought we to walk with our God—how loosely to the things of earth! What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness. And if the Apostle could say, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as ye know that ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your Fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot;" and i

the Holy Ghost could say that "God will be sanctified in those who draw *near* to him," oh! how much more in those who are not only "redeemed by the blood" of Jesus, not only made near to God, but are one in God. As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." It is in the realization of truths like these the power of practical consecration consists, and as we apprehend by faith, through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, the high position into which the love of God has called us, and union to the Lord Jesus Christ has introduced us.

Now if, as believers, we are in God,—and if our Lord prayed that *all* who believe on him should be in God, surely the blessing is secure, and the answer certain;—let us then avail ourselves of our position. Surely our welfare is not more our own concern, than it is his. Hath he not said, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye." Have you cares? "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Have you need? Bring all your need to him. Are you weak? Help,—*help* has been laid up for you. You may go to God at all times, and under all circumstances; for if he has united *you* with himself, he has opened a way of access for you to himself *for his own sake*. Even for his own sake he will not neglect you or refuse you.

If all believers are in God, then are we related one to the other in Christ, by a far closer and more lasting tie than any earthly relationship. Mere earthly relationships shall be severed by-and-by; death will do it for time, and the day of judgment will do it for eternity; but those who are related in God can never part, can

never meet for the last time, can never say farewell. If indeed we are in God, we are brothers and sisters of Christ Jesus; "let us love one another;" let us "bear . . . one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" let us sympathize with one another; let us remember he has promised to acknowledge from his throne, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Oh! let us not wrong or misjudge our brethren; and, above all, let us take heed that we offend not one of the little ones who believe in Jesus; "For in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

If we be in God, let us live on God; let us not live on a miserable daily pittance when we have the fulness of God for our portion. Let us live on God, that we may live for God; and forsaking all other lords, and other loves, all other portions, let us "walk worthy of our calling," as those who are "not their own, but are bought with a price." And let us evermore plead "that God may be glorified in us, and we in him," that he may shed abroad his love more and more in our hearts, that he may communicate to us his joy and peace, that he may manifest himself in us more and more by the Holy Ghost, that he may increase our knowledge, that we may be "renewed in knowledge day by day," and be established in communion, till we are "able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." And let us return love to him for love. The only thing you can return to God is love. If he upbraid you, you cannot upbraid him; if he

gry with you, you cannot be angry with him ; but you may return love for love, nay, he delights in the return of love. "We love him because he first loved us."

Oh ! let us love one another more, let us not be disheartened when we see apparent divisions between the people of God ; there is a much closer union between them, than any of us suspect, or than the world has the faintest idea of. It is true, misconceptions, misconstructions, and prejudices tend to divide the children of God one from another, a sad pity that it is so. Yet they are truly united. Ask them what about sin : they will *all* tell you, with one voice, "It is the abominable thing we hate." Ask them of Jesus ! they will *all* tell you his "name is as ointment poured forth." Ask them of his blood ! they *all* agree about it ! that it is "*the precious blood,*" and that it has spoken peace to their consciences ; to that blood they all fly in every time of difficulty, and sorrow, and danger, and fear. Ask them of righteousness ! they know no righteousness but "his righteousness only." Ask them of love ! they tell you of the "love that passeth knowledge—*his love.*" Ask them of rest ! they all tell you they expect no rest till they rest in him. Ah ! this is *true* union. Wherever you find a child of God over the whole earth, "Jew or Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bondman or freeman, male or female," you will find they are all at one in these, the only and all essential principles. Pity it is that with so much to unite them, very trifles are so often allowed to separate them. "*An enemy hath done this.*"

The Lord's prayer shall be fully answered by-and-by, and there shall be the fullest manifestation of this

union. "I in them, and thou in me, that they also may be one in us."

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"That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."—

JOHN xvii. 21.

IT was to be expected that a prayer in which our Lord evidently opens out all his heart, and pleads all his Father's covenant engagements with him, should contain more or less reference to every matter which the purposes and promises of Jehovah had pledged him to, and that all the dispensations of divine grace would be embraced, and comprehended in his petitions. Our Lord was now pleading, with his hands as it were upon the sacrifice on the altar, and he is claiming upon the ground of his own infinite merit, all that the love of God in Christ had intended and prepared for his creatures.

There are unspeakable promises and dignities of grace and glory attaching to the Lord Jesus Christ in connection with his titles and royalties. I may remind you of *four* principal ones, into which all the other merge. Jesus Christ is "*the Son of God*," and as the Son of God he is the "King of Saints," and the Head and the Husband of his church. This is his highest title, and his highest prerogative. But he is more. He is "*the Son of Abraham*," and as the Son of Abraham he is by birthright "the King of the Jews," and shall be "the glory of his people Israel." But he is more. He

“*the Son of David*,” and as the Son of David he is, and shall be manifested “King of kings and Lord of lords,” “the desire of all nations,” and the “light to lighten the Gentiles.” But he is more. He is also “*the Son of man*,” and as the Son of man all judgment is committed unto him, and he shall yet be manifested as the King of all the earth,” and the Creator and Head of “a new heaven and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness.” Our Lord had just prayed for his believing people of all times and ages, all those who should believe on him through the gospel—confining his prayer to believers in the gospel; he prayed for them that they might be united to one another, and to himself, according to the divine pattern, “As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.” Now he further contemplates *a result to the universe* from their union one with another, and with himself, “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

The promise made by God to Christ as Son of God contained a great deal more in it than that he should be the head of his church, and head over all things to his church, though that was the chief promise, the fruition of which was his chief object in coming down from heaven to die. But we find, in Ps. ii. 7-9, Jehovah thus addressing his Son,—“I will declare the decree . . . Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”

Again, promise was made to Christ as the seed of Abraham; you will remember, the Apostle, arguing in

Gal. iii., declaring that when the promise was made to Abraham, and to his seed, "he saith not, And to seed as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, *which Christ*:" therefore the promise to the seed of Abraham was in reality a promise to Christ; and it was on this wise, "In thee"—and "In thy seed"—"shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And accordingly, in Rom. iv. 13, this promise is interpreted by the Holy Ghost, "that Abraham should be the heir of the world." This was secured to him in his seed, Christ: therefore Christ is the heir of the world.

Again, as Son of David, there was a promise of somewhat similar character made to Christ, to which the Psalmist alludes very distinctly in Ps. lxxii.: "Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's Son." Verses 8, 9—"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust." Verse 11—"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; and nations shall serve him." And he winds up the psalm in the beautiful language commencing in verse 17—"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." And so it shall be "Amen, and Amen." And the Psalmist adds, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended"—that is to say, there was nothing beyond *that* to be desired.

Again, promise was made to the Lord Jesus, as the Son of man (see Dan. vii. 13, 14). "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Observe, the promise of dominion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a kingdom in which his people are to reign as kings and priests with him, is associated with, and results from, the sacrifice of himself. In Ps. cxii. this is very clearly brought out. The well-known quotation of this Psalm by our blessed Lord upon the cross—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"—proves him to be the person speaking, or spoken to throughout it. In verses 27, 28, we read—"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee, for the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the governor among the nations." Evidently this was part of the covenant arrangement, on the understanding of which the Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the mediator between God and man, and the Saviour of sinners. Nor is this teaching peculiar to the Old Testament. If we turn to Phil. ii. we have the same thought exactly, viz.—the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ to universal dominion associated with, and resulting from, his great stoop. In verses 6-8, his humiliation; and then, from verses 9-11, his consequent exaltation are thus ex-

pressed, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Let us refer to a few passages which we may compare with these, and containing promises which we evidently find in the Lord's mind, when, having prayed that his believing people might be one with each other and in God, he looks forward to the ultimate result of their union in its aspect and bearing on the world, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Isa. lxxv. 18, 19: "I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. In the prophecy of Malachi (chapter i. 11) we have these remarkable words, "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." In Heb. ii. 8, 9, we have the Apostle quoting Ps. viii. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet,"—that is, under man's—"For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put

nder him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour," Turn to Rev. xi. 15, the accomplishment of the mystery of God, "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." And once again, see Rev. v. 13, where we have the chorus of the whole creation when Jesus takes the throne, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." It is hardly necessary to seek further evidence that the Lord must have had these promises and performances in his mind, and in his heart also, when he used the language we have under consideration, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

There are few expressions in Scripture to which greater variety and latitude of meaning is attached than—"the world." Take a few leading examples. Sometimes the world is put for all those who are saved out of mankind, by union with the Lord Jesus Christ, *i.e.*, his elect people; as, for instance in 2 Cor. v. 19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." There *the world* means those to whom God does not impute their trespasses,—of whom the Psalmist says, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven; whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth iniquity." The blessed ones of God are there called *world*. Sometimes *the world* is used to define and describe wilful unbelievers, rejectors, and neglectors of the Lord Jesus Christ: "The whole world lieth in this wicked one." (1 John v. 19.) "If any man will be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God." (James iv. 4.) Sometimes by *the world* the Spirit of God means the Gentiles, as contrasted with the Jews (Rom. xi. 12) sometimes the heathen who have not heard of his name or seen his glory.

What, then, does our Lord mean when he prays "that *the world* may believe that thou hast sent me?" He evidently does *not* mean his disciples; he had already prayed for them. He does *not* mean those who shall believe on him through their word; he had prayed for them: "Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Evidently believers are a peculiar people, and a high calling and peculiar privilege is theirs! Union in one body of which he himself is the head, even as he and his Father are united, "that they also may be one in us." Again he does *not* mean the wilfully unbelieving world, rejecting Christ: "he that believeth not is condemned already," "he that believeth not . . . the wrath of God abideth on him," is the testimony in John iii. We then, to whom does he allude? I conceive he alludes to mankind in general,—to Jews and Gentiles in their national character; first to "Israel, to whom blindness

part has happened till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in ;” and then to the Gentiles, who, through the Jews, being brought to the knowledge of the Lord, are also to be gathered in, “as doves to their windows :” for if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles ; how much more their fulness ?” (Rom. xi. 12.) You remember a beautiful promise to this effect in Isa. xlix. 6, : “It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel : I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.”

Observe, he does not ask that the world may be one with himself ; that prayer is limited and confined to those who did believe on him, and who should believe on him through the word. But now he speaks of the result and influence which the manifested glory of his people shall have upon the world, “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

Again observe, and this is also very important, the means by which the world is to be brought to this true sense and conviction of Jehovah having sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world, is not the mere preaching of the gospel, but the manifested union of the church of

God with one another, and with Christ in the Father. Not faith, but vision; not the preached word, but the effects of the preached word upon the children of the Lord God Almighty, united in one family with the elder brother, Jesus. Even "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." This is the vision of the union of the church of God with its head, in the apprehension of its happiness, and in the light of its glory, the world shall be convicted or convinced. And this is but half the truth; for see Epi. iii. 8-11, "Unto me . . . is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that"—not only that the world may believe, but that—"now unto *the principalities and powers in heavenly places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The church of Jesus Christ, washed in his blood, clothed in his beauty and in his glory, united to himself as head, and in him as head to the Father, as manifested to the universe, is to be the everlasting monument of the love of God, of the grace of God, and of the power of God, upon which not only the world shall read that God sent his Christ, but on which the angels and principalities and powers in heavenly places shall contemplate and be made acquainted with the manifold wisdom of God. He will point to his glory as he is deemed in Jesus, and he will summon all the universe

admire what his love could do, what his grace could do, what his blood could do.

Thus it is written, Rev. iii. 12, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem," (where our country is, and conversation is, and our citizenship is,) "which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." The world shall see and admire and believe the love which passeth knowledge; and angels, and principalities, and powers in heavenly places shall behold and admire also. In Rev. xi. 23, 24, we have the same truth in figure: it is written of that city of which we have been speaking; "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it"—"That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

In verse 23, we find another expression of our Lord's, which supplies a climax to this, "That the world may now that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Observe the distinction still maintained between his own,—the members of his body, and the world, which beholding their beauty and happiness, their unity and their glory, are convinced or convicted.

The prophetic order in which all this is to take place seems to be,—First, on the completion of the church the Lord will return, as we have it in 2 Thess. i. 10, "to be

glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." Thus the saints of God will be the medium through which the Lord Jesus' beauty and glory shall shine forth as to be admired, "admired in all them that believe." By whom? By the world, and by principalities and powers in heavenly places. See also Isa. lx., "Arise and shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" and then the consequence (verse 3), "the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings shall come to the brightness of thy rising." There is a passage in Isa. xix. which is very seldom noticed, and yet it is most striking, verses 22-25: "The Lord shall smite Egypt, he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria,"—two great enemies of Israel, all through her history were Egypt and Assyria; she was in bondage in Egypt, and led captive into Assyria,—“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” “That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” “He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” And all who do not bow to the sceptre of his grace shall be trodden down under the heel of his power. “As I live, saith the Lord

every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

"That the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Very interesting it is to observe the two agencies mentioned in this gospel; whose testimony and witness on the earth, are to result in the conversion, or the conviction of all mankind. One is the Holy Ghost, the other is the church. In John xvi. 8-11, we read, "When he is come, he will convict"—such is the original—"the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." And the church, in our text, "that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Yes, every tongue shall confess it, either to their everlasting confusion (as it is written, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish"), or to their everlasting happiness, as those who have fled for refuge and submitted themselves to him who shall put down all rule, and all authority and power, till all his enemies are beneath his feet; when, having abolished death and banished sin, and having destroyed the works of the devil, he shall render up the kingdom (for the conquest and redemption of which he left his throne and became man) to God, even the Father, its rightful, glorious Head: "Then shall *the Son* also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." "I in them, and thou in me," and they in us; "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

This subject seems to suggest three practical lessons for ourselves.

1. Evidently, the Lord here implies that the one Bible the world reads is the character of Christians, their likeness to himself. Are we doing the world justice? The world will not be brought to a sense of ruin, nor to any practical sense of the goodness of God in sending Christ, but by the manifestation of his grace in his people. Are we manifesting Christ? Are we living epistles, known and read of all men? You perceive it lay much upon the heart of Jesus that his people should be so manifestly one with one another, and one with himself, that the world might take knowledge of them,—“that the world may believe that thou hast seen me.”

2. Another practical lesson is in reference to our divisions. O God forgive us for our divisions! Nothing gives greater occasion to the outside world, than the differences between professing Christians. The bickerings and contentions between men and women of different sects and denominations of the visible church to God; has always been one of the world's greatest hindrances. Instead of looking on, and being constrained to confess, “See how these Christians love one another,” the world has too much reason to say, “See how they carp at one another, see how they judge one another, see how they malign one another.”

3. The honour of Christ, and the happiness of the world, as well as the dignity of the church of Christ demand that we should lay aside our wrangling, and gather round our head. Oh! let our lives and convers-

on be more Christ-like, and our hearts more knit together "in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of peace." It is written, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

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And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one.—JOHN xvii. 22.

TRULY these words open out unspeakable mysteries to us. Our Lord here expresses all his heart. Union is still his theme—union with God—this alone can satisfy his great love for his people. "That they all may be one" (verse 21); "that they . . . may be one in us" (verse 21); that they may be one, even as we are one" (verse 22), "that they may be made *perfect in one*" (verse 23).

We may infallibly gather from our Lord's words that this union is the greatest and fullest of all *conceivable* blessings, and the source and spring from whence all other blessings flow. Union with God is the highest grace vouchsafed to the Lord Jesus Christ himself; and all his personal dignities, the fulness of his fellowship and communion with Jehovah upon the one hand, and with his people upon the other, are results flowing from that union; and so our union with him (and all believers have union with him, and with the Father in him) is the source of all the grace which ever has been, or is, or shall be bestowed upon us, and of all the glory to be revealed, whatever that glory may be.

There are four unions spoken of in the word of God and divine grace has connected them all most marvelously and most closely with one another. The *first*, the incomprehensible union which is nowhere attempted to be described or defined, but is simply stated for the obedience of our faith, viz., the union of the three persons in the Godhead; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the triune Jehovah, immortal, invisible, possessing all divine attributes—eternity, omniscience, omnipotence. The *second*, the union of the man Christ Jesus with the second person of the blessed Trinity, the Son of God, making one glorious *person*, God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, the Captain of our salvation, the Author and Finisher of our faith. The *third*, is the union between himself and his believing people; the members of his body having taken our nature into heaven, we are one with him there, and having sent down the Holy Ghost to take possession of us on earth, he is one with us here. The *fourth* is the union of the believing people of God one with another, and this union obtains, whether we speak of those who have gone before, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, &c., or those who are at present upon the earth, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, or whether we speak of the future ingathering of all who shall at any time believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; for he says, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one.” When we trace back this union to its divine source, and mark the connection from beginning to end, I say it is almost impossible to conceive, much less to express, the heights,

and depths, and lengths, and breadths of the love of God contained, and revealed and bestowed on us. Here we believers of every age, one to another, united in one body, in one head, the Lord Jesus Christ; and that Lord Jesus Christ our head, is personally united to the second person of the blessed Trinity, so that he is in himself God-man personally: by virtue of his manhood, united to all his believing people,—by virtue of his being the second person of the blessed Trinity, united to the Godhead, the source from whence our life descends, and the fulness from whence our blessings flow. Oh the truth is unspeakable, and the glory that *must* follow from it is inconceivable! This the love of God hath accomplished, and this the love of God hath revealed.

Perhaps there is no passage in the word of God which affords a higher view of this subject than the text. We have been in the habit of regarding glory as the end and ultimate climax of all that the grace and love of God can do for us, or cause us to attain unto. If such has been our idea, we are altogether wrong, here we are taught that there is something *beyond glory*, even UNION WITH THE GOD OF GLORY; and that the glory given to Christ has been given by Christ to his people as a means and qualification for the realization, the enjoyment, and the manifestation of *union with the Father*. “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.” Everything here is grace, but oh! what grace. We read of the “riches of grace,” and we read of “the riches of the glory of grace,” and truly it is here expressed.

Already in the second verse of his prayer our Lord

had mentioned the fact of a people being given to him and of power over all flesh being vested in him for their benefit. In verse 4, he spake of a work being given him to do on their behalf; we know what that work was even "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision of prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy" (Dan. ix. 24). In verse 8: of *words* given to him and taught to them—even the glorious gospel, the testimony of the love of God in Christ to sinners, given to Christ to be confirmed and fulfilled, and given by Christ to his people as finished and fulfilled, to be believed and enjoyed. He had spoken (chapter xiv. 16) of another gift to them, the gift of the Holy Ghost, "another Comforter" to dwell with them for ever. And finally, in our text, of *glory*—"the glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one, even as we are one," "that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." What a divine summation of bliss and fulness of privilege the Lord speaks of, how satisfying and unspeakable the rest his love has prepared for us!

We may here infallibly gather the amazing fact, that the glory he has given us, and which had been given to him by the Father, is given as the element, in which we shall reach unto the attainment, and enjoyment of union with the Father in him,—just as Christ's union to God was the foundation of all the grace and glory given to him, so our union to Christ shall be the foundation of all the grace and glory given unto us; for he says, "The glory

which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one." We perceive at once this union is more than *all grace*, and more than *all glory* ; because all communicable grace, and all conceivable glory, are to flow from it. Salvation is a great and unspeakable grace and blessing, but what is it compared to union with God ? Justification from all things is a great and unspeakable blessing, but what is it compared to union with God ? Sanctification is a great and unspeakable grace and blessing, but what is it but a preliminary, a qualification, a means, for union with God ? "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name ;" and "if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," Christ's fulness flowing to him from union with his Father, and our fulness flowing to us from union with Christ in whom all fulness dwells,—till "of his fulness we shall all receive, and grace for grace."

Let us endeavour to approach this mysterious subject by degrees. "The glory which thou *gavest* me, I have given them." You observe the glory he speaks of, is such he could *receive* ; and such as he could and did *bestow*. Now Christ hath a glory which is incommunicable. As the second person of the blessed Trinity our Lord possesses the essential glory of the Godhead. This is glory he could not receive because it was essentially his own. It cannot, therefore, be the glory to which he here alludes ; for he speaks of a glory he had received. Again, as God-man mediator, the Son of God incarnate in the man Christ Jesus, our Lord hath a

personal glory which, although received, is and ever must be peculiar to himself, and is also incommunicable—the glory of the only begotten Son of God, “the first begotten from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence;” moreover, the glory of our Christ, *the head of the church* is also peculiar to himself; the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ as mediator, whereby he became the treasury and receptacle of all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, is peculiar to himself; so that there is a glory given to him with which he cannot part. But there is a glory given to him relatively,—a glory given to him who is the Son of God, who is our Lord Jesus Christ, and given to him for the special object and purpose that he might dispense it to his believing people till out of his fulness they receive, and grace for grace; and if we consider the glory which is incommunicable which he hath as the second person of the Trinity and the glory which is incommunicable which he possesses as God-man in his own glorious person, I know of no limit we can assign to the language of our text when he says, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

Now dwell for a moment upon this glory given to Christ—the given glory, not the essential glory,—with that we can have nothing to do but to behold it. He speaks of this in verse 5, where he calls it, “the glory which I had with thee before the world was;” and again (verse 24) “that they may behold my glory.” I wish to speak only of the glory given to him, moreover in his relative and official character. What is this

ory? Read it, beloved, in the glorious titles which our heavenly Father has given to him, "the Prince of life," "the Prince of Peace," "the King of Glory," "the Everlasting Father," "the Husband" of his people, "the Saviour" of his people, "the Redeemer" of his people, "the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person." Read it in the *names* by which his Father calls him: "Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth;" "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" "My servant, whom I uphold;" "My salvation unto the ends of the earth." Read it, as implied in *the place* to which Jehovah has exalted him, having given him a "Name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." He exalted him to his own right hand in the majesty of the heavens, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet." Read the glory given to him in *the prerogatives* with which he is endowed: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" "I have laid help upon one that is mighty;" "As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Read the glory given to him in *the offices* to which he hath been consecrated. "Prophet"—to teach us all our Father's mind, and to reveal to us all our Father's grace. "Priest"—Jesus "glorified not himself to be made

an High Priest ; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son ; to-day have I begotten thee." Priest—to transact God's affairs with man, and man's affair with God ; to make atonement for sin ; to present his own merits in our behalf as a sweet savour, in the fulness of which he intercedes before the throne, and by-and-by, to come back and bless us ; to put the Father's name upon us for evermore. " King"—to put down our foes ; King—to reign in our hearts ; King—to reign over the universe, and to " ride upon the heavens for our help." Oh, think of the glory !

And why was this glory given to him ? It was not given to him for himself. He is none the richer for all this ; it was a *stoop* for the Son of God to accept such offices, or to be the recipient of such glory. He made himself less than the Father, by taking a nature which could receive anything from the Father. Why, then, did he receive all these things ? Not to enrich himself, but that his people might be enriched, and yet not apart from him, but as united to him ; therefore, it was as our treasury and as our trustee !—for he says, " The glory which thou gavest me I have given them ;" he accepted the glory given to him only because he was their head ; and he holds it for them, that they may enjoy it, and be blessed in its fulness.

What, then, does he mean ? All the glory arising from the fact that though he was "in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God : but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself"—(literally, emptied himself)—and " became obedient unto

death, even the death of the cross"—(Phil. ii. 6-8); all the fruits of that infinite sacrifice which hath satisfied justice, glorified the law, and commended the love of God; all the fruits of his conquest of death and hell, and the world and the flesh; all the fruits of his glorious resurrection and ascension, and constant intercession; all the fruits of his exaltation to the right hand of the majesty in the heavens,—all the glory redounding from this he gives to us. He, who is the image of the invisible God, stamps upon His people, the image of the invisible God, for to this are they "predestinated, even to be conformed to the image of his Son." All his glorious offices are exercised with a view to his people, and they shall have the benefits; all the fulness of his grace has been received in order to be communicated to them, and so it shall be till they are filled with all the fulness of God, for "the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." He speaks of it as *done* because it is sure. All the glory given by Jehovah to Christ is laid up in Christ as intended for his people, settled upon his people, secured to his people, and either has been dispensed, is being dispensed, or shall be dispensed till they *are perfected in one*.

"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them," "that they may be one, even as we are one." Union with Christ's person, participation in Christ's grace, the communication of Christ's glory given to them—to his people—"that they may be one"—(1) One with each other in him. He has slain the "enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," which separated believing Gentiles from believing Jews, that he

might "make himself of twain one new man, so making peace." (2) As being one with each other in him, or in the Father with him, "one in us." "Made nigh by the blood of the cross, having forgiven us all trespasses blotting out the handwriting of that which was against us, which was contrary to us, he took it out of the way nailing it to his cross (Col. ii. 13); and having bestowed power on his people by his gift of the Holy Ghost, he opened "a new and living way, which he had consecrated for us, through the veil;" and thus with the incapacity overcome, and the divine nature bestowed, every barrier removed, and his redeemed made gloriously nigh, he prays "that they also may be one even as we are one. Only think of it! It must mean that they may evermore be found partaking of the same holiness, enjoying the same happiness, interested in the same honours, blessed in the same vision, dwelling in the same place, enjoying the same fulness. And this is the end of all his travail the answer to all his prayer, and the result of all his imparted glory—"that they may be one, even as we are one." How do our divisions shame us, how doth the want of union amongst the people of God mar the glory! Did Christ thus long for manifested union, and shall true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ sever themselves one from the other, about every petty difference and dispute, which narrow-mindedness, bigotry, selfishness or the malice of the world and the devil have invented and magnified?

Finally. Let me suggest some inferences arising from what is here said, "that they all may be one." The Lord's prayer is not for strong believers, or for deep

ought Christians only ; but for the weakest, and the feeblest, and the most unlearned of all the redeemed family. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they *all* may be one," the weak and the strong in one glorious bond of union by the Spirit, through the Saviour, to the Father. Oh ! think of the blessed prospect here opened out to *all* believers. All believers in Jesus Christ are equally redeemed, one as much so as another ; equally justified, one as much so as another ; equally sanctified in the sight of God, one as much so as another ; and they shall be equally glorified, one as much so as another ; "for whom he justified them he also glorified ;" equally happy, for God shall be their inheritance, and his fulness shall be their portion ; equally filled ; equally folded ; "for the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

O God the Holy Ghost, deal with our souls, teach us to believe these things, teach us to realize them, teach us to receive them, teach us to *reflect* them. And, O God, teach us what confidence we may repose in thee ; thou didst all these things for us when we were thine enemies ; and if thou didst give to us thy Son, that he might give to us the glory that thou gavest him, that we might be one with thee, wilt thou not "with him also freely give us all things ?" O Lord, bless us, and feed our souls for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, that he "may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

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“I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”—JOHN xvii. 23.

WITH those words our blessed Lord concludes the supplicatory part of his prayer. Here, in the presence of his disciples, he enters into the details of covenant settlements arranged with his Father before the world was, and to fulfil the conditions of which he came down from heaven to take our nature and die in our place, establishing a divine, personal, and everlasting union with his people thus united *in himself* to each other, and to his heavenly Father also. This consummation was the joy set before him, for which he “endured the cross despising the shame.” For this he had given them, the glory which his Father had given him, “that they may be one, even as we are one.” (Verse 22.) And now, on the eve of his sacrifice, and on his way to the altar, he thus emphatically expresses his whole heart concerning them. “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” Even Christ himself could ask no more, God himself can give no more, the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost can enable the believer to enjoy no more than Christ here asks for his people. Having uttered the prayer, he ceases to supplicate, and might well say, as his great fore-runner did, “The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.”

“I in them.” Amazing indwelling!—not only my love in them, mine interests with them, my fulness, my spirit, their portion,—but I myself in them, the inexhaustible fountain of their holiness, and their happiness, the fulness of their glory, their inheritance, and their crown! “I in them”—not only *with* them for ever, not only *for* them, and against all those that are opposed to them, not only *near* them, but “*in* them,” as their very life and glory, in them as the head doth live in the members of the body, in them as the glory fills the temple of the Lord, in them evermore, the incarnate fulness of God in their souls. “I in them”—*in all of them*, the least of them as well as the greatest, the most ignorant of them as well as the most instructed. “I in them”—in them as their portion for ever. Oh! it is very very blessed to dwell upon this saying of our divine Lord, “I in them, and thou,” my life, my felicity, my perfection, and my glory, “in me.” Christ in our nature is the bond uniting his people to the fountain of deity: Just as the Lord Jesus Christ receives his fulness by immediate union and communion with the fountain of deity, so his people shall evermore receive their fulness from immediate union and communion with the incarnate Son of God. Just consider! Christ in his believing people as the Father is in him. The Father was the life of Christ. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me (note the figure illustrating union), even he shall live by me” (John vi. 57). Moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of his Father as his strength and power. How often we find him in the Psalms addressing him and saying, “Jehovah, my

strength," "my stronghold." Now, as the Father was the strength of Christ, so is Christ the strength of the soul that trusts in him, and he promises to make his strength perfect in weakness. Jehovah was the sustainer and preserver of Christ: "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him . . . I will hold thine hand, and will keep thee" (Isaiah xlii. 1, 6). So is the Lord Jesus Christ the upholder of his people. We read they are "preserved in Jesus Christ." (Jude i.) Just as Noah was preserved in the ark, as Lot was preserved in Zoar, and as the manslayer was safe in the city of refuge, so the soul that trusts in Jesus is safe—safe for ever; for Jesus is his stronghold and his rest, and the Father is the stronghold and the rest of Jesus. The Father was in Christ, speaking and working. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works sake" (John xiv. 10, 11). So is it with the soul that trusts in the Lord Jesus; Christ works in that man, and the Apostle says, "It is no more I that live, but Christ liveth in me." Moreover, the Father was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The Father was in Christ in his incarnation; in the wilderness, and on the cross, in his triumph over death and hell, and so in Christ in his people, he is identified with them in all he did, and suffered and achieved, so that when he died upon the cross they were crucified with him; when he

ose from the dead they rose with him ; when he sat down at God's right hand in heavenly places, they sit here in him, identified with him for grace here, and for glory there. . "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Our Lord mentions two objects he had in view in praying for this manifested union of his people with each other in him, and with the Father. The first is as regards them, for their complete happiness and everlasting security, "that they may be made perfect in one." The second as regards the world, that the manifest union between the Father and his people in Christ, might convince the world "that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Let us examine these things.

First, as regards his people, "that they might be *made perfect in one.*" All God's creatures were created perfect--when he created the angels they were perfect, but they were only creatures, therefore not immutable and they fell. When God created man he created him perfect, but he was only a creature, he was not immutable, therefore when temptation assailed him he also fell. Why did angels fall? They were not made perfect *in one.* Why did man fall? He was not made perfect *in one.* Behold the salvation of God! and how divine grace has provided that there shall be no future fall, no more tears in the world he is about to introduce, no more suffering, no more sin in that new heaven and new earth—"That they might be made perfect in one ;" God himself, the centre of their existence, and the cir-

cumference of their portion ; God himself, as a wall of fire round about them, their security for evermore ; the incarnate Son, the divine channel by which God's fulness shall flow into them ; the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the divine agent by which that fulness shall be communicated. Thus made perfect in one, God himself must fall before his children can fall, Christ's fulness must be exhausted before his members can fail. The Holy Spirit must be overcome before our happiness in God can be hindered, or the heart that trusts him can be disappointed, for we are made "perfect in one." Our Lord's words evidently refer not to mere creature blessings, but to supercreation grace—not created fulness but union and communion with himself in God. God dwelling in us and we in God, is henceforth to be the source and supply of the perfection of Christ's redeemed (See 1 Thess. i. 1.) This is our glorious position, and our promised portion, to be "filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 19). But not only is union with God in Christ intended, union with each other must exist, "that we might be made perfect in one." No individual believer, however great his need or his capacity for grace, could receive or contain all the fulness of God. The whole body in all its members must be united to the head, that "*all* having nourishment administered, and knit together, may increase with the increase of God" (see Col. ii. 19). "In the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, we *all* come unto a *perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and grow up into him in *all* things" (see Eph. iv. 13-15). It is "with *all saints* we must comprehend

the love of Christ that passeth knowledge." "That we may be made perfect in one."

Oh! there is much that is called union on earth. We have our Christian bodies and formularies and creeds, we have our tests of fellowship, our uniformity of ritual, and our conformity to selected standards of faith and practice, but the union of which our Lord Jesus Christ speaks has God for its centre, Christ and his fulness for its supply, the Holy Ghost indwelling for its power, and *there is no other true gospel union.* Thus only are we made "perfect in one," and filled with all the fulness of God. Himself, our life and light, and portion; his heaven of heavens our home, and his attributes our defence through Christ by his Spirit, "made perfect in one," and never more to be assailed by Satan, sin, or sorrow, in the rest remaining for the people of God; and the countless ages of eternity as they roll over shall see us enjoying more and more of that fulness into which the love of God in Christ has introduced us.

The second object our Lord had in view in the manifested union of his people in one was "that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Our blessed Lord here embraces in his petition vast generations yet to come. Evidently his words have reference to future dispensations of grace, and to men and women yet unborn on our earth, for it is written that "in the dispensation of the fulness of times he will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him" (Eph. i. 10). He had spoken in verse 8 of his own dear disciples thus, "they have

known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." And now he declares his purpose "that *the world* also may know that thou hast sent me." There is, however, a vast difference in the dispensations of grace, to which our Lord refers. The disciples believed "because of his word, and we, like the disciples, are born in a day when it is our privilege to take the word of God as the ground of our hope and confidence. Those who now believe of our Lord Jesus Christ the absent one! the rejected one are all "baptized by one Spirit into one body." "They are made perfect in one;" they are "all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." But when the day shall come when all the promises to the people of God shall be fulfilled, and we shall be manifested, in union with him and like him; our voices like Christ's, our features like Christ's, our affections like Christ's, our very bodies like unto his own glorious body, changed "according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," then the world shall know; but this knowledge will not be the result of faith, but of vision. No suffering for Christ then—no casting in their lot with a rejected Saviour then—the king shall have returned, and his people in union with him shall be manifested, and the world shall see what it never saw before, and learn what it never believed before, that God sent his Son for a work great and worthy of him, that the work is accomplished, and that he who came to fulfil it loved the people for whom he died with a love that passeth knowledge, and that the Father also loved them even as he loved the Son!

We may enumerate *several hindrances* in the way of the world's reception of the revealed fact, that God "sent his Son into the world;" and the second which is like unto it, that he loves his redeemed people even as he loves Christ. First, the great power of Satan over the minds, bodies, and characters of the Lord's people: it puzzles the world, and, no wonder, to see evil so rampant. Another hindrance arises from the fact that in the long-suffering of God execution is not speedily visited where sin is committed. "Because, sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. viii. 11). Another difficulty presenting itself is the absence of the King. The world knows that the people of God confess their love to Christ, and believe in Christ's love to them, and yet their King remains away in a far off country; he seems to the eye of sense to have forgotten all about them, leaving them to toil in the wilderness, and to struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil. Another great hindrance arises from the want of conformity in God's children to the image of their Father. Alas! that the world should see so little in us to recommend to them our Father's character, and our Saviour's name. Again, the circumstances of the Lord's people are a great difficulty: some of those who love God best, and who serve him most, seem to have nothing but trouble all their days; their way on earth is a weary one, and their path a dark path, so far as the world's observation goes; while perhaps those who have no care, and indeed little thought for God, seem to have all prosperity, "their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart

could wish." The great love of God to his people is not displayed ; and the world mocks at the notion that such love exists, when it sees nothing but conflict, tears, and failure, and hears nothing but the sighing of the prisoners or perhaps the murmurings of the discontented and unbelieving. The manifestation of the sons of God is not yet

But the day is coming when all this shall be set right, when the Lamb of God shall put Satan down manifestly and for ever, when execution shall be visited immediately upon all rejectors of the grace of God, "Gather *first the tares*, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. xiii. 30), when it will be no longer said the King is absent,—the King shall be here! "As the lightning shineth from the one end of the heavens to the other, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." The day is coming when his own hand "shall wipe away all tears, and he will take away the rebuke of his people from off all the earth," and when it shall be manifest even to the eye of sense that there was a great thought in the mind of the Father when he sent Christ, a great work accomplished by the Son of God when he bowed his head upon the cross and gave up the Ghost, that it was for a great object the Holy Spirit descended to seal sinners to the day of redemption. It is written, although not realized, that "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19); and again, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of *firstfruits* of his creatures" (Jas. i. 18). It is written, even of Israel, "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,

what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. xi. 15.) How much more, when the church is manifested and "made perfect in one:" The day is coming when it shall be so: "all flesh shall see the salvation of God:" Our Lord is anticipating it in his prayer—"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." O world! because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; "blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

As the gospel now divides those who hear it into believers and rejectors, so shall "the manifestation of the sons of God" divide the world into friends and foes. It shall be said of many in that day, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." And the Lord himself tells us, in reference to it by his servant John (Rev. xix. 19) how the kings of the earth and their armies, shall be gathered together to make war against the King of kings and Lord of lords. But so far as I understand our text we learn, that even as the presence of the Holy Ghost would convince or convict the world of unbelievers, "of sin, righteousness, and judgment" (John xvi. 8), so shall the perfection of the church of Christ, as witnessed by the world of the future dispensation of which our Lord speaks, convince or convict the world "that thou hast sent me."

And this leads us to consider the second thing that the Lord desires the world should learn from the manifested union of his people, viz. :—"that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Wonderful words of

unspeakable import! It is a fact that Jehovah, the Father, loves the sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, as he loves the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord himself tells us that it is even so! I know that I am addressing many who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh! remember God never loved, and never will love Christ, apart from you. Think of that. He never regards you, and never will deal with you apart from Christ. You might as well speak of loving the head of your child apart from his body, as speak of the Lord Jehovah loving Christ apart from his people. Remember, if the Father loves you as he loves Christ, he has always loved you: even from the past eternity, all his arrangements have been with a view to you, for all his arrangements have been with a view to Christ; and he will continue to love you through a coming eternity, even as he loves the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, if the Father loves you as he loves Christ, he will never change in his love to you, notwithstanding all the infirmities of which you complain, notwithstanding all the shortcomings you confess, notwithstanding all the inconsistencies which weary you, notwithstanding all the hiding of his face from you. Remember, if the Father loves you as he loves Christ, he loves you notwithstanding the peculiarities in your circumstances, many of which may puzzle you, and perhaps puzzle others; he will never cease to love you, because he will never cease to love Christ. And, lastly, if the Father loves you as he loves Christ, his love for you is infinite, and there are no degrees in infinity. Now, since this is truly so, oh! learn to depend upon your Father at all times, and under all

circumstances. Confide to your Father your cares, your distresses, your anxieties. Be in love with your Father, who has been so much in love with you. Expect great things from the love that loves you, even as Christ is loved, and wait upon your Father. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." He has given us three pledges of that love in the gift of his Son, in the gift of his Spirit, and in the gift of his word. Oh, brethren, what must remain of blessing, where we have such pledges of his love!

One word more. It is to you who do not yet believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who have never come to him, who do not trust him,—why will ye doubt? Love opens its arms to welcome you, why will you go away? Everlasting grace supplicates you to come and find rest for your souls, why turn a deaf ear? Jesus' prayer has gone up,—it is registered in heaven, not only for his disciples but "for them also who shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one." Why will you continue to reject the testimony which the Holy Ghost came down to bear witness to? "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Oh, that in the hearing of his word, every unbeliever may be persuaded to believe in Christ, to receive Christ, to trust in Christ, to be one with God in Christ, and happy with him for ever!

39

“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”—JOHN xvii. 24.

OUR divine Lord having pleaded as we read in verse 22 “the glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,”—(marvellous words of grace and love which seem to bring us up into an height of bliss, in the mere contemplation of which we can hardly breathe)—and having declared that their manifested union, and their consummated bliss, would be the means whereby the world should know how great was the work which God has sent his dear Son to accomplish, and how inconceivable the love wherewith they were loved, thus enfolding and enshrining them as it were in the very love wherewith he had himself been loved : he now whispers to his Father’s heart the ultimate object for which he was here on earth in our nature, and for the attainment of which he was about to lay down his life, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

He had prayed for the realization and manifestation of their union with each other, in him and with God in heaven ; he does not pray for the *fact*, he had no need to

pray for that ; he himself was the pledge on earth of the indissoluble union of his people with their heavenly Father. And, oh, what a proof he was just then giving of how close that union was ! Our Lord was in the immediate anticipation of Gethsemane : the dark shades of Calvary were gathering round his blessed soul, yet nothing could disengage his thoughts from his beloved people ; he was thinking not of himself but of them, not even the prospect of the glory into which he was about to return could make him forget them ; he had said in the early part of his prayer, "Glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The time was come, soon, very soon, the everlasting gates shall be opened to the King of glory, and he shall take his place at the right hand of God, amidst the hallelujahs of angels, and archangels, and the company of heaven, yet is he thinking of his dear people, and pleading for them ; his language clearly conveys that he would not be satisfied with the glory itself unless they are with him, participating in his felicity, and beholding his glory. He had said as much to them before, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John xiv. 2). The head and the members must be together "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am" (in my divine nature, and where I shall soon be in my human nature) ; "that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."

"Father, I will," this manner of addressing God is peculiar to Christ. We find no parallel to it in any of

the recorded prayers of Old or New Testament saints. Indeed we must feel conscious that such language uttered by a mere creature would be entirely unbecoming, if not absolutely irreverent and profane, but as used by our Lord on this occasion they express the last will and testament of God's beloved Son, whispered into his Father's heart, concerning his redeemed. A short time previously he told his disciples of his will in reference to them and during the term of their separation. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John xiv. 27). Now he tells his heavenly Father what his will was with regard to their future, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."

Beloved, we all hope to be one day in heaven. What is the character of that heaven for which *you* hope. If I knew what sort of heaven you were longing for, I could tell the true character of your religion. Is your heaven the heaven of the Mohammedan, where you expect *carnal ease* and pleasures, and all the things that minister to the natural taste and appetite, where you shall have music and dancing, and the excess of such pleasures as you follow after here,—is this the heaven you anticipate? Well, then, if so, a life of carnal indulgence is about the best preparation for it. Or is the heaven you anticipate the undefined and indescribable *apprehension* the world imagines—a negative felicity, not so much an existence of positive enjoyment with God as an escape from damnation—a sort of heaven you would fain postpone as

long as possible, seeing you much prefer the things you have, and see, to the things you have not seen, and do not realize or desire? If this is the heaven you anticipate, then the undefined religion of the world is about the best preparation for it. But the heaven of the child of God, of the man whose soul is born from above, the man whose eyes are enlightened with divine light, and whose heart is instructed with divine truth, is here described in one sentence, "To be with Christ, and to behold his glory." The great Apostle of the Gentiles was caught up to the third heaven, and saw what he could not describe; but you will observe that ever after his thought of heaven was this—*to be with Christ*: "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." "With Christ." Our blessed Lord Jesus himself seems to have had no more perfect way of expressing what heaven was than this, "*where I am.*" When he would cheer the forgiven and dying thief, and awaken the note of triumph in his heart, the promise was, "To-day shalt thou be *with me* in paradise." And now when he would tell all his loving heart's desire, all his last will, to his heavenly Father, he thus expresses himself, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be *with me* where I am; that they may behold my glory."

Beloved, is this the heaven you are anticipating? If it be, let me ask what is your title to it? There must be a title corresponding to the dignity of the position into which you are about to enter. Away with all merit of your own!—human merit could give no title to be with Christ, and to behold his glory. All your charities,

your observances of ordinances, your prayers, and your services, even were they perfect and spotless, which they are not, could give you *no* title to such a position. There is but one title to heaven, the blood of the Lamb,—have you claimed it? have you got it? Only one name is recognised there! the name which is above every name, have you learnt it? do you plead it?

Again. If this is the heaven you anticipate, what is your meetness for it? Would you be happy there? It is a very solemn question, and one we ought in all sincerity to ask ourselves. Suppose the God of all grace were this moment to introduce you to where Christ is, that you might be with Christ, and that you might behold his glory, would fellowship with him make you happy? Would the employments of heaven suit your taste? I tell you, the employments which best suit the taste of many of you here, have no place there; the only society there is a society to whom Jesus is all in all. Do you care for such society here? The long days of eternity there are spent in praise, ascribing “blessing and honour and power to him that sits upon the throne,” magnifying his holy name, and with unspeakable adoration worshipping him that “made us kings and priests to God and our Father.” Do you enjoy this sort of thing now? If not, what earthly reason have you for supposing you would enjoy it there? “Ye must be born again” if the heaven Jesus speaks of—being with him, and beholding his glory—is to be your own consummated happiness. Even here on earth the true believer’s heaven consists in being with Jesus, beholding him by faith. That beautiful passage, in 2 Cor. iii. 18, thus de-

scribing the Christian's heaven here—"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The word of God, the gospel of his grace, is the glass, where the Spirit of the Lord displays Jesus, there the eye of faith sees him, and there the heart of faith learns to enjoy him. At the best we see but through a glass darkly, at the best our spiritual vision is very dim, and our glimpses of him but fitful, passing things. Yet, after all, it is our heaven on earth to see even a little of Jesus, to enjoy a little of him, and to have him with us in spirit, even "though now we see not." I speak to the experience of every child of God amongst us when I say, you know well in the times of sorrow when no earthly comforter is near; in hours of temptation, when the world, the flesh, and the devil are too hard for you; in seasons of conflict, when you realize that you are wrestling "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places;" in times of conscious weakness and failure; in hours of sickness, when "weary days and weary nights are appointed to you," and you seem to draw nigh to the valley of the shadow of death,—how sweet it is to behold Jesus, to see the glory of his grace as it is revealed in his word: you have found him "all in all," all you want, *as* you want, *where* you want, *when* you want him, and *for evermore*.

But if this beholding him, if this communion with him is our privilege here in the wilderness, what will it be by-and-by to behold his unveiled face in the glory,

no longer through a glass darkly, no longer as afar off from him, but with him, beholding his glory—the summit of felicity, the enjoyment of eternity.

This beholding does not merely mean that we shall be spectators. In Isa. lxv. 1, the word implies participation in that which we behold, “I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.” And not only is participation implied, but assimilation. The Apostle John tells us, “When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;” this is the believer’s heaven. “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory.”

Oh, that glory! “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty, thou shalt behold the land that is very far off,” “we shall be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;” and may “know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.” We shall see the salvation of God, we shall know the depths from which it has plucked us, we shall realize the heights to which it has exalted us, we shall “apprehend all that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus,” we “shall enter through the gates into the city,” we shall “sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God,” and never feel ashamed in their company, evermore complete in Jesus we shall have our portion where he is all in all. Oh, what glory! when we shall wear the white robe—“the best robe;” when we shall receive “the crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to us in that day, and not to us only, but to all those who

love his appearing ;” when we shall even ascend the throne on which he sits ! for unto “him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Oh, what glory ! when we shall drink of the river of the water of life that floweth “clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb ;” when we shall sit down under the shadow of the tree of life, and banquet upon its fruits and be filled with God. Oh, that glory ! which “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive !” when we shall “stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God,” and singing our new song, the song that “no man could learn but those who were redeemed from among men.”

A most important and precious part of the subject remains, viz., the ground upon which our blessed Master thus claims us for the glory. He pleads *atonement* and *substitution*. He who knew no sin was about to be “made sin” for those for whom he pleads that they “might be made the righteousness of God in him,” and have all the benefits thereof. He pleads the fulfilment of covenant arrangements, and everlasting settlements between himself and the Father. We are too apt practically to overlook or ignore these great facts—indeed, the majority of professing Christians seldom get beyond the notion of a merciful God and Saviour. The Lord Jesus Christ here introduces us to “a just God and yet a Saviour.” Observe his arguments ; he pleads his relationship—“Father.” Remember it was because of his Sonship he was ordained to be our teacher, “This is

my beloved Son, hear him." It was because of his Sonship he was anointed to be King, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. Kiss the Son lest he be angry." It was as the Son of the Father he was consecrated High Priest, "the word of the oath . . . maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." Again he pleads his Father's everlasting love, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Already he had pleaded his finished work, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," (verse 4), next he pleads "Thine they were and thou gavest them to me." *Seven* times he alludes to this truth in his prayer. Then he pleads, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." Finally, he pleads "the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." And then he declares to his Father the object he has had in view, and for the attainment of which he was about to die, and what was "the joy set before him for which he endured the cross, despising the shame," "that they may be one, even as we are one," and "that they may be with me where I am, and that they may behold my glory."

"Father, I will." That will is registered in the heart of God! That "I will" has been endorsed in the resurrection of Christ! That "I will" has been attested and sealed by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and it is recorded for the encouragement of our faith in God's most true and faithful word. Now let us strengthen our *faith* by dwelling on his words, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." Many there be that seem to say unto our souls, I will they shall *not* be with

Jesus where he is, to behold his glory. Memory! conscience! the broken law! opportunities neglected! mercies abused! God forgotten! each in turn seems to say, "I will you shall *not* be with Jesus." Failure upon failure! sin upon sin! inconsistency upon inconsistency! seem to challenge us, "you shall never be with Jesus?" But our God and Father puts the will of his dear Son against all the opposers of our souls and tells us that "neither death nor life shall separate us from his love." Encourage *your joy*. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," and not only so, but "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God!" Encourage *your hope*, anchor your tempest-tossed soul here where hope maketh not ashamed. A few more rising and setting suns and you shall be with Christ. "The Lord himself shall be thine everlasting light and the days of thy mourning shall be ended;" those weary hands shall take the crown, those feeble knees shall bear thee through the golden streets, and those lips shall praise him. "I will," blessed "I will!" The world, the flesh, and the devil may say I will not, while Jesus says "I will."

What a practical subject this is! Shall we spend our eternity with him, beholding his glory? then "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Shall the eyes that are to look on Jesus be busy with objects that displease him? Shall the ears that are to listen to his welcome be busy with sounds that dishonour him? Shall the members that are to minister to him in the glory, work at sin here "as it were with a cart rope?" O God forbid!

Lastly, one word to those who do not believe in Jesus. You have not come to Jesus, and you cannot anticipate with us the joy of being with him, beholding him, and participating in his glory. Yet the Son of God came down to *where you are*, he left the heavens and came into the world, and those to whom he came gave him but a sorry welcome, "the Son of man had not where to lay his head." Unasked he came, and "his own received him not;" now he has gone up where he was before, having "led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." He has by his offering of himself, made it a just thing with God to forgive and receive you, he invites you to come to be with him *where he is*, to claim his precious blood as the ground of your acceptance, his blessed name as your introduction to God, and his faithfulness and truth as your argument. Now "why will you die," why continue to reject him? why persist in saying, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Oh, think of this! It is his registered will in heaven that every poor sinner who believes upon him, who takes him as God's gift of salvation, (which he is,) shall be with him *where he is*, beholding that glory which the Father gave him, who loved him before the foundation of the world, and who loves all poor sinners who love Jesus.

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“*O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.*”—JOHN xvii. 25.

THE subjects suggested by these words are very many, and precious beyond all description to the “believer.” As our blessed Lord began his prayer, so he ends it, by calling on his “Father.” It is an endearing relationship, it is a tender tie, but in his case most of all. Never before from the days of eternity did such a Son, and under such circumstances, address such a Father. You remember how beautifully the Saviour portrayed a Father, in the parable of the Prodigal Son. He saw his wandering child afar off, when no other eye could recognise him; he ran to meet him, and put his arms round his neck, and kissed him, when no other arms would receive him. *God was that Father!* “I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself” (Jer. xxxi. 18). No other ear in heaven or earth could hear him! Now these were *sinful* children. With what listening ears, with what love, with what sympathy, think you, did the Father in heaven regard the supplication of his only begotten Son—his holy One, his spotless One.

Let us endeavour to have definite ideas concerning the person who here prays, and the character in which he thus addresses his Father. There are very confused notions in men’s minds upon this subject. It is the God-man that prays, he who had taken our own nature, and humbled himself to be made in the likeness of sinful

flesh—and it is as mediator he prays. As the divine Son, the second person of the blessed Trinity, “equal to the Father as touching his Godhead,” *he could not pray*: it would be incongruous his doing so, he could ask for nothing he had not, he could receive nothing that did not essentially belong to him. It is true that as the second person of the blessed Trinity, the eternal Son might speak to the first person as his eternal Father, being begotten before all worlds; but not so the God-man mediator Christ Jesus, whose incarnation is not attributed in Scripture to the first person, but to the Holy Ghost, and also to his own act; as it is written—“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Luke i. 35.) And again, Heb. ii. 14, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise *took part* of the same.” When, therefore, our blessed Lord here supplicates his Father, he prays as head of his church, and in the same sense in which he teaches us to address him in what is commonly called the Lord’s Prayer: “My Father, and your Father; . . . my God, and your God.” We cannot be too clear upon this most important subject. The prayer before us is, therefore, a prayer of faith, he who uttered it lived by faith. He was “the author and finisher of faith.” (Heb. xii. 2.) One of the objects he had in coming down from heaven into our nature was to teach us how that Father might be known and trusted.

“O righteous Father,” in thus addressing God, our Lord pleads the promises made to him by his Father ac-

ording to covenant everlasting settlements, entered into before the world was. He had finished the work his Father had given him to do, and he now claims from a righteous God the equivalent of blessing for those for whom he laboured. It is like his language in Ps. xvii. 1 : "Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry ; give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips." When he prayed (verse 11), Father keep them and sanctify them, his plea was, "Holy Father keep . . . those whom thou hast given me." And why? Because Jehovah had pledged himself to Christ by his *holiness* (see Ps. lxxxix. 35), and he claims the pledge. But here, when he expresses the desire that his people may have the full reward of his own travail, and that they may be with him where he is, he appeals to the righteousness of God—"O righteous Father." His appeal is founded on his *own merit*. He was about to be made an offering for sin, and to bear in his own body upon the tree the tremendous penalty due to all "the iniquities, the transgressions and sins," of those he represented, and for whom he pleads. "My Father, my righteous Father, the hour has come, I am on my way to Calvary, I am about to pour out my soul unto death, I am about to drink to the last dregs the cup of thine indignation against the sins of my people, I am about to suffer, the just for the unjust, that I may bring sinners unto God : Father, I am about to blot out in my own blood, the handwriting of ordinances which is against my people, and which is contrary to them, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to my cross ; I am about to spoil principalities and powers, and make a show of them openly,

triumphing over them on the cross ; I am about to magnify thy holy law, which they have broken, and all this in accordance with our everlasting covenant. ‘O righteous Father,’ I appeal to thee that as thou dost accept mine offering, they may be with me where I am, to behold my glory.”

Consider how complete must be the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, and how perfect his satisfaction for sin, when he can thus claim from the righteousness of God such an equivalent for his people ! Oh ! remember, and forget not, that God’s righteousness is now pledged to bestow upon every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ all that he has merited in his life, and in his death, for sinners who believe on him. In this blessed fact Christ rested, and here he pleads it with his righteous Father, that our faith may rest there also, and that we may realize that when we pray, we are not merely dealing with a God who is merciful, but with a righteous Father, who is “faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” It was pure mercy in God to provide a Saviour when man had sinned—it was pure mercy in God to promise that Saviour, it was pure mercy in God to send him ; but, having provided, having promised, having sent him to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and *having accepted* his offering and raised him from the dead, it is no mere mercy in God to give the benefit to those sinners who believe on him,—it is *justice* to Christ, though it is mercy to them. Now, the Lord here rests our salvation upon the faithful promise of the faithful promiser, “in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began”

(Titus i. 2), a promise which must have been made to Christ himself, for there was no one else to promise to. See also Isa. xlii., where the Lord speaking to Christ, pledges himself that he will hold his hand, call him in righteousness, keep him, and give him for a covenant to the people, for a light of the Gentiles, "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." The Lord promised Christ that he would do this. It was pure grace in the Lord to make that promise; but now Christ has come to fulfil the conditions of the covenant, and make an end of sin, and he appeals to his righteous Father to secure to him and to his believing people all the benefits of his passion.

Take a few passages of Scripture to illustrate how this truth is pressed upon our attention by the Holy Spirit, in the New Testament (1st), as to the forgiveness of our sins. It is written, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins". 1 John i. 9. Why? Because Christ has suffered in our place, it would be injustice to Christ if he did not. (2nd.) As to our justification from all things, it is written, that through the propitiation of Christ, God is "*just*, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 25, 26. (3rd.) As to the vengeance of God upon those who oppose our souls, and the rest to be enjoyed by us when our warfare is over, and our fight is done, it is written, "It is a *righteous* thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on

them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i, 6-8. (4th.) As to the acceptance of our poor services rendered in Christ's name, it is written, "God is not *unrighteous* to forget your work and labour of love." Heb. vi. 10. (5th.) As to the promised crown for which we hope! it is written, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the *righteous* Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Our Lord's words in the passage before us are in complete harmony with these passages of Scripture, for having declared his will that his people might be with him where he was, to behold his glory; he now seals and crowns his claim by an appeal to his "*righteous* Father!" Beloved, that righteousness was so stern that when man sinned and the Lord Jesus Christ presented himself as a substitute to atone for the sinner and for the sin, God would not abate one jot of the penalty due; "judgment was brought to the line and righteousness to the plummet," and "he who was in the form of God was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him." And he now appeals to that same righteousness, that seeing justice has been satisfied, and the broken law vindicated, his people for whom he died may not have one tittle less than God the righteous Father knew his own righteous Son deserved. So great is the salvation of God! Here let us rest our hearts, our hopes, and our confidence, for here Christ himself rested.

But the words of our blessed Master refer to what

follows as well as to what precedes them. "O righteous Father, *the world hath not known thee.*" What a mysterious fact this is! The Creator of the world unknown by the world, the benefactor of the world a stranger in our midst, not from want of evidence, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." His messengers proclaimed him, and "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And yet, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Not of the Gentiles only is it written that they knew not God, but of Israel! "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." For thirty-three years the Son of God in our own nature lived in our world, and taught, and worked, and yet after all how comparatively small was the success of his ministry! How few there were in the hour of trial even amongst his own chosen disciples to watch with him even for one hour!

Beloved, we might easily ask curious questions very difficult to answer as to why it was, and how it was, that God could permit this; how in the midst of light men are so often found walking in darkness: how is it possible for such a God, so full of love, and grace, and power, to permit such a state of things to exist: how he could suffer his position here to be usurped so long

by "the God of this world, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Just see how Christ treats this question. He doth not attempt to fathom it. As on another occasion he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." So here he answers all, with one word, "*Righteous* Father." Infinite wisdom, power, love, and rectitude has guided all that Father has done, and all he was doing or would do. There is a parallel passage in the Old Testament which throws a considerable light upon our Lord's words here, where, after promises made to him—very wonderful—including "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified;" our Lord is represented as answering, "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*" Isa. xlix. 3, 4. Thus in the prayer before us our Lord commits himself and his work "to him that judgeth righteously," and would have us silence all our misgivings, and unravel all our difficulties, thus "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Clouds and darkness may be round about God, but "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." How sad a state of things is here described. Perhaps you say this refers to the world of heathendom, the world of past ages of darkness. Well! and how is it with *you*? We grant that there is a vast difference

between the days of darkness and ignorance which "God overlooked," and the times in which our lot is cast; we are surrounded with light, and compassed with privileges, but how is it with you? What do *you* know about God? I do not ask what do you know about a God; "there be gods many, and lords many," but I ask you, and I ask myself, what do we know of *the God of the Bible*? What do we know experimentally of him? What do we know of God as our "righteous Father?" Do we know him at all as Father? We can have no experimental knowledge of God, but as we have soul-communion with him as "our Father." What degree of communion have *you* with God? Oh! beloved, do not the thoughts, the words, the works, the tastes, the likings, and the dislikings of many of us evidence that we know very little practically of God, and that we have very little practically of communion with "The Father," and where is our meetness for heaven if we have no practical knowledge of God?

Ignorance of God is the root and source of all the evil existing in the world. And in this one sentence our Lord expresses that solemn fact, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." What is profligacy, but a filthy stream flowing from ignorance of God? What is the love of the world, and of the things of the world? What is infidelity? What is sensuous religion—a religion of forms and ceremonies, and bowings and turnings, but the fruits growing out of ignorance of God? Beloved, continued ignorance of God must finally exclude us from heaven, for it is written, and it is a solemn statement, "the kingdom of God is *within you*." Now, if the

kingdom of God doth not take possession of you *here*, you can never enter into it *there*. "The world hath not known thee." You that do not know God, you that have not come to God by Christ, what are you fit for? Where are you going? It is a solemn question. Ask *yourselves* what you are fit for and where you are going? May God himself send home the enquiry into your hearts! If but one beam of the Spirit's light were even now to shine upon your souls, what results would follow, what discoveries you would make! you would find out that the whole of your past life had been a *blank*, a withering blank, a blot, a mistake, and useless. God has given you a body, but you have used it for yourself not for God; God has given you a soul, but you have neglected its interests; God has given you hands and feet, but you have used them as instruments in the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and God himself has been practically ignored by you from the first day of your consciousness until now. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee."

On the other hand the *knowledge* of God is the root and source of all bliss, the means of justification (Isa. liii. 11), the earnest of glory, and the meetness for glory, the characteristics of "the children" and "the fathers" in God (1 John ii. 10). "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace." Yea, "through the knowledge of God peace and mercy are multiplied," and in the knowledge of God we are made partakers of the divine nature (see 2 Pet. i. 2-4).

The world hath not known thee; "*But I have known*

thee, and these have *known* that thou hast sent me." On this wide earth there was not one solitary being but himself who knew that Father. When God looked down that day upon the world he had made, there was not one heart beating in sympathy with his own, but the heart of that beloved Son who was addressing him. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son." "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." "O righteous Father, I have known thee." Yes, he came from his bosom; he knew him well. Who can describe that perfect, boundless, inconceivable knowledge? "I know thee, and I delight in thee—I can trust thee—I can commit all to thee. 'I have known thee,' I know all thy perfections, I know all thy decrees, thy counsels, thy purposes, thy gentleness, thy long-suffering, thy grace, thy love, thy kindness, 'thy thoughts that are to us-ward,' I know them, and I want my people to know them, and because I know thee, I appeal to thee as my 'righteous Father,' that thou wilt, for my own sake, and for the sake of the great atonement made to thy justice, gather all my believing people to be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, for I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." This was the Saviour's prayer. "These have known that thou hast sent me." Very limited was their knowledge, yet he will give the best account of them. Our dear Lord takes credit not only for what he had done for them, but for what he was yet about to do for them through his Holy Spirit, unto the fulness of the purpose of his boundless love. The day is coming in which we

shall not need to say, "know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

May God grant that we may understand these precious things more clearly and fully. I know they are beyond what our poor finite hearts can conceive, but I know that the Spirit loves to take of the things of the Lord Jesus, and shew them unto us. I know it would be a great comfort to many a child of God to be enabled distinctly to see that while God—a merciful God, has given Christ to us ; God—a righteous God, has accepted Christ for us ; and that the very "righteousness of God," which in consequence of sin must inflict curse and ruin upon the race of man, is now *our own* by virtue of him who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and his blood cries out in heaven for a throne, and a crown, and a mansion, and a welcome for every poor sinner who comes to God by him. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee : but I have known thee, and these"—God grant it may be true of you—*these* "have known that thou hast sent me."

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"And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."—JOHN xvii. 26.

WITH these words our blessed Lord closes his prayer. He had declared in the hearing of his disciples what his last will concerning his people was. He had spoken of

their qualification for the enjoyment of the privilege and position for which he intended them—viz., the knowledge of God. “I have known thee, and *these have known* that thou hast sent me.” He had connected their knowledge of the Father with his own knowledge of him, because our security that we shall have the full knowledge of God imparted to us, is, that our Lord Jesus Christ possessed it. “No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” And now, finally, our Lord speaks of the means whereby he will communicate the perfect knowledge of his Father, and the fruits and effects of it, in the hearts of his people. “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

“I have declared unto them thy name.” Yes, he had told them, and he tells us what it is, “Father!” God desires to be thought of by us as a Father, spoken to as a Father, trusted in as a Father, loved as a Father, and obeyed as a Father, and our Father’s name is “Love.” He has told us “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “I have declared unto them thy name, and *will declare it*,” referring, no doubt, to the further manifestations of his Father’s grace in his own death upon the cross for sinners, his resurrection from the dead as the Lord of life and glory, and the consequent gift of the Holy Ghost who was to lead them into all truth, “to dwell” with them, and to “be in them” “a well of living water springing up into everlasting life,” and for evermore. For, beloved,

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whatever we shall know of God, in time or in eternity, Jesus will be the Teacher; whatever we shall see of God, Jesus will be the Manifestor, whatever we shall enjoy of God, Jesus will be the Medium; "I have declared unto them thy name, and *will* declare it."

Observe how the results of his doing so are grouped about this statement and promise! (1st.) "These have known that thou hast sent me." It is characteristic of the "little children" that "they have known the Father;" and the highest characteristic of the "fathers" in God is the same. They have known the Father, only they have known him longer and better (1 John ii. 13, 14). How is this? "I have declared unto them thy name." (2nd.) They shall be "with me." None who are ignorant of God can ever be with Jesus. (3rd.) They shall "behold my glory;" none shall behold the glory of Jesus who are not acquainted with God. (4th.) "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." Oh! what is to produce that love but the knowledge of it? And (5th) "'I in them,' the seal of all their blessedness, the fulness of all their joy, the crown and consummation of all thy purposes towards them, the fruition of all that great salvation thou hast provided for them."

In Old Testament Scriptures the same association and connection between the proclamation of the name, the vision of the glory, and the fruition of salvation, may be observed. See for an illustration, Exod. xxxiii. God had been communicating with Moses, and the heart of the Lord's servant was burning within him for further knowledge and fuller manifestations of God. Verses 13, 14: "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me

now thy way, that I may know thee. . . . And he said, my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. So it is. Our knowledge of the Lord must be obtained and deepened in communion with the Lord,—his presence with us and his rest! A promise so full of grace kindles the desire of Moses more and more. (Verse 18 :) “I *beseech* thee shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all *my goodness* pass before thee, and I *will proclaim the name* of the Lord before thee.” (Verses 21, 22 :) “And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.” Observe the connection. The proclaimed name of the Lord, the knowledge of his goodness, the beholding his glory, and the position in which we behold it. We have the *same* connection here, only the glory is more fully revealed, and the sinner’s position while he beholds it, is more wonderful.

In the thirty-fourth chapter of Exodus (verses 5-8) we are taught how the Lord fulfilled his promise. “The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him *there*, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head towards the

earth and worshipped." Here Jehovah proclaims his own name to his servant: there is no blessing any poor servant of God needs that is not contained in that name, and no privilege in the communicable fulness of God that is not revealed in it, and presented to our faith there. Examine for a moment, "the name of the Lord"—(1) "Jehovah," who "calleth those things which are not as though they were," who giveth being to things that else had no existence. Now, poor sinner, perhaps you say, "All my religious duties, all my prayers, my tears, my services, are as though they were not, they are poverty itself, worse than poverty—they are nothing." The name of our Father is "The Lord Jehovah," he giveth being to things which are not and are as nothing! Whatever may be your nothingness and insufficiency there is all-sufficiency in him. Perhaps you say, "It is not so much that my prayers and services are nothing, I do pray and I try to serve, but I am so very weak and feeble, so easily turned aside, so constantly cast down, O my leanness, O my weakness!" The name of our Father is (2) "The Lord *God*," EL, mighty, omnipotent, strong. Weak one! "he maketh his strength perfect in weakness."

But perhaps your difficulty is of another class. You ask, "Is he willing? willing to impart that strength to me? Is he willing to take me all unworthiness to be his own child?" The name of our Father is (3) "*Merciful*," full of mercy, and therefore willing to help thee and to have compassion, one who will regard thee with tenderness and with love, thou poor needy soul. But you say "I am a miserable creature; what possible motive could

he have for looking upon such an one as I am? If I could feel that the desire of my heart was to him as it ought to be, I would be comforted, if I could feel I had appreciated his mercies and blessings already bestowed upon me in some sort as I ought, I might be comforted and encouraged; but alas! I do not feel that it is so." The name of our Father is (4) "*Gracious*." What is the meaning of that? One whose motive for being merciful is in himself. The Lord—*gracious*, who never looks out of himself for a reason why he should make himself strong in behalf of any poor sinner. He doth not shew mercy because we are good, but because he is good, and he doth not stand upon our deserts, but upon our need. But you may say, "Still my case is not met, I have been such a constant sinner, I have sinned against light, and love, and knowledge; although I have known God to be all this for many a day, and called him Jehovah, and pleaded his strength, still I have gone on sinning, grieving God, these twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, until I am ashamed to lift up mine eyes to the place where his honour dwelleth." Is this your case? Well, brother, our Father's name is (5) "*Longsuffering*," slow to anger! One who can bear with the wanderings, failings, weakness, and inconsistencies of his poor sinful creatures. But you say, "If you knew all you would perhaps agree with me that I have gone beyond the limits of God's longsuffering, I have sinned exceedingly, abounded in iniquity, I have broken all my promises made to God and all my vows, I have tempted the tempter, alas! alas! I may well be discouraged." But our Father's name is (6) "The Lord . . . *abundant in goodness and*

truth." He puts his abundance of goodness and truth against your abundance of sin and falsehood.

But you say, "These things are for his people—for his chosen ones, for those to whom he has revealed himself, and although the Lord be thus to such, yet I fear he will not be so to me." Yes, let us still seek the Lord—for our Father's name is (7) "the Lord . . . *keeping mercy for thousands,*" as if he would say I have not laid out all my mercy upon the patriarchs, I have not laid out all my mercy upon those you regard as my children, I have not poured out all the riches I possess, upon those who are with me in the glory, or still serving me in the world; I have a treasury store, *I keep* mercy for thousands. Surely we may all come before him pleading such a name. But you will say, perhaps, "Alas! I have committed every class of sin, with every species of aggravation." O listen again to our Father's name (8), the Lord "*forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin,*"—here all sorts and varieties of sin are enumerated, here you have sin in the germ, in the blossom, and in the fruit; iniquity and transgression, and sin; the sins of nature and the sins of life, the sins of weakness and the sins of presumption, the sins of ignorance and the sins against knowledge. These, saith the Lord, I forgive—and this is my name for ever!

But, perhaps, you say—for the self-righteousness of the human heart is a wonderful thing—"I fear to believe—I cannot believe in a God of this description, because it would be a temptation to me to 'do evil that good might come.' To teach that God pardons so freely, and on his own account, all iniquity, transgression, and sin,

is a doctrine of liberty, removing all restraints from sinning, and confounding the difference between good and evil." Oh! not so, not so,—our Father's name is (9) the "Lord . . . *that will by no means clear the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." The cross of Christ is the answer to all such objections against his name and against his glorious gospel; Christ crucified hath been sent forth to be "a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare God's righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; and to declare at *this time* (also) his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.) "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him;" the iniquities and transgressions of the fathers were laid upon the Babe that never sinned, that sinners might be "made the righteousness of God in him," and have the blessing. We read "Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped." And well he might! And shall not we "Trust in the name of the Lord and stay ourselves upon our God," "His name is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe."

Beloved, the dispensation of shadows is past and gone, and we have been listening to the words of "God manifest in the flesh," "God hath spoken unto us by his Son." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of

darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is written in the latter part of Exod. xxxiv. that when Moses came down from that interview with God, his face shone so that the children of Israel could not look at him, although he wist not that his face shone. How much more, when by the teaching and quickening power of the Holy Ghost, the sinner is enabled to contemplate the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ—the unveiled glory, how much more I say should our faces shine, that men may see our light and glorify our Father which is in heaven. The privilege arising from this contrast is pressed upon us by the Apostle, "Not as Moses put a vail over his face But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 13, 18). Here (*in the Bible*) we have God's own portrait, for he upon whose face we gaze by faith is "the image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of his person," and the manifestor of the Father's name. This word is God's mirror, where the Spirit reveals him, that we may see the glory, even the goodness of the Lord. It is the written record of what Jesus hath declared concerning the Father's name and the Father's love. The light by which we behold the portrait is the Holy Ghost. Even here on earth as we contemplate him in his word, we are changed into the image of his glory. How much more when no longer as through a glass darkly, no longer as at a distance, but with him where he is, beholding his

glory, shall we be *altogether* like him, "changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Yes, by-and-by, when this poor veil of flesh shall be removed, when we know as we are known, and love as we are loved, we shall have the full fruition of that which our God, in Christ, purposed for our happiness.

Let us learn to prize more and more "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." It is the means whereby God doth impart to us the knowledge of himself; whereby he doth establish fellowship with us in Christ, revealing himself to us as in a mirror, and stamping his image upon our souls; it is the means whereby he doth impart to us the Holy Ghost, and shed abroad in our hearts his love; it is the means whereby Christ himself is formed in our souls, the hope of glory. There is nothing beyond it, as a possessed blessing and privilege, but the fruition of the glory it proclaims to us.

To this latter he seems to allude in the closing words of our text. "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Our Lord's final purpose concerning his people, as here expressed, reaches far beyond the circumstances of time, and far above the region of thought; it can only be fulfilled in the fruition of the beatific vision; "The love wherewith thou hast loved me . . . in them, and I in them." Observe! *not* the love wherewith thou hast loved *them* . . . vast! indescribable! unspeakable as that love had been; *not* the full realization of its length and breadth and depth and height, although this shall surely be enjoyed; *not* that thou shouldest love them as thou hast loved me,—

no need to ask for that—*this love was theirs*. Our Lord had told his Father (*see* the twenty-third verse) that he would have even the world know “that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” He was, himself, the seal and pledge of the love wherewith the Father had loved them, and it was no part of his work or mission to procure it. “We have known and believed,” saith the beloved disciple, “the love that God hath to us.” No, it is “the love wherewith *thou hast loved me . . . in them* ; meaning not only that the love of God to Christ should be bestowed upon *them*, and that the full participation and realization of his love to Christ should be enjoyed by them, but *much more*, even that God’s own love to Christ “may be in them.” Known by them? Yes. Realized by them? Yes; but more—*possessed by them, and bestowed on him*. *The very love wherewith God himself loved Christ let down into the heart of Christ’s people!* “that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them ;” he himself evermore dwelling in them, thus enshrined in his Father’s love and in their love.

This shall be the crowning fruit of that union for which he had been praying. (1) “I in them, and thou in me, *that they may be made perfect in one*.” (2) “I in them, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and *hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*.” (3) “That the love wherewith *thou hast loved me* may be in them, and *I in them*.”

“I in them,” not merely they in me, something beyond that—“I in them!” Oh! in how many ways, and by how many means he has provided and secured that his

people shall be one with him. By *incarnation*: "forasmuch . . . as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." By *the Holy Ghost*, "the Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father, he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." By *his word*; you remember his answer to Judas's question, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John xiv. 23.) And finally, by *his Father's love*! "The love wherewith thou hast loved me in them, and I in them." Our Lord Jesus Christ could ask no more, and the fulness of the communicable blessing of deity can impart no more than he here prays for. The beloved disciple seems to express the same truth when he wrote, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John iv. 15, 16.)

May God himself evermore keep us in memory of these things, till we enjoy the fruition of them with himself. We here learn that *union* with the Lord Jesus Christ is salvation, and that there is no salvation where this union does not exist. We learn, moreover, that the union between Christ and his people has its foundation in the ineffable union between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the blessed Trinity. This union of the Three in One is first let down to the Lord Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, who is *both* God and

man in *One Person*, and then this union descends from the Lord Jesus Christ, to the members of his mystical body, *i.e.*, to sinners of every age and of every clime, who hear his word and believe on him. (See verse 20.) He is their Saviour; he is their husband; he is their head, and they are "the members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones"—"I in them, and thou in me."

Again, we here learn that the ground of our salvation and our security is not God's love to us, but rather God's love to Christ, and this he pleads when claiming that we shall be with him where he is, and that we may behold his glory: "For thou *lovedst me* before the foundation of the world" (verse 24); and again, "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." Now, if God's love to Christ is the foundation of our salvation, let us not be cast down when we find difficulties within, and trial without. God's love to us is the love of God "*which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" And therefore, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from" his love. (Rom. viii. 39.)

Again, remember it is Christ's interest in you rather than your interest in Christ, which is the ground of your hope and the earnest of your inheritance. "Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." Why? because Christ is yours? No, but because "*ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's*" (I Cor.

iii. 21-23.) Christ's interest in us is the foundation of our interest in Christ. Always begin at the beginning, go to the fountain-head if you want to be happy. God's love to Christ, and Christ's interest in us, are the pillars of our salvation and security.

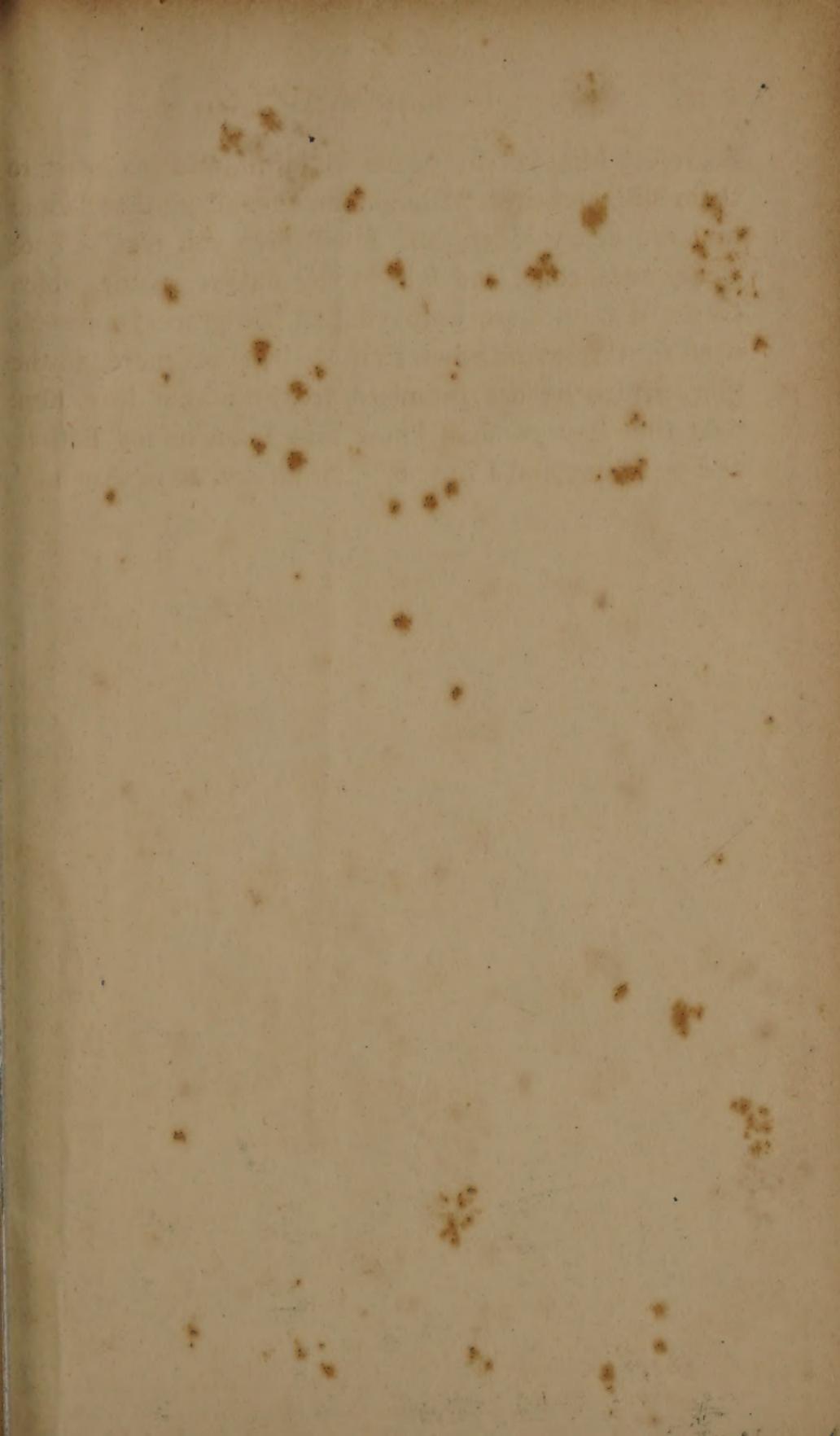
And yet again ; when we are painfully conscious of the hardness of our hearts, and the coldness of our love to him who first loved us, let us remember and not forget what is here taught us and promised to us. A day is coming when *God's own love to Christ* shall be imparted to our souls, and we shall love him with the love wherewith the Father loves him : there he shall rest for ever, inhabiting not only the praises of his people, but enshrined in their hearts in the very love wherewith his Father loved him.

And last of all, and crown of all ;—"I in them." Christ and the divine love must be evermore together ; where this loves dwells, the Father dwells ; the Holy Ghost dwells, God dwells ! "The love wherewith thou hast loved me . . . in them."

"And I in them." Thus he would express his ultimate purpose and the consummation of all he intends for his people, "I in them," not only "in them" as their comforter in the wilderness, their strength in the conflict, their hope, their joy, their portion ; but in them when I am with thee in "the glory which I had with thee before the world was" "thou in me, and I in them," dwelling in "*the love wherewith thou hast loved me.*"

Oh, it dazzles the understanding to think what the love of God in Christ has provided for us sinners ! Will you, reader, reject him ? Many, many to this very hour

do reject him, yet he opens his arms, and his heart to them still, and says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Poor weary ones, come and find in the Father's name, which Christ doth declare unto you, all the grace your souls need for time; and when time shall be no more, all the glory which he has promised to those that love him. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John xiv. 20.) Amen.





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